



CARADOC  
OF THE CHURCH IN  
THE SANDS

SEAFORD WATERS



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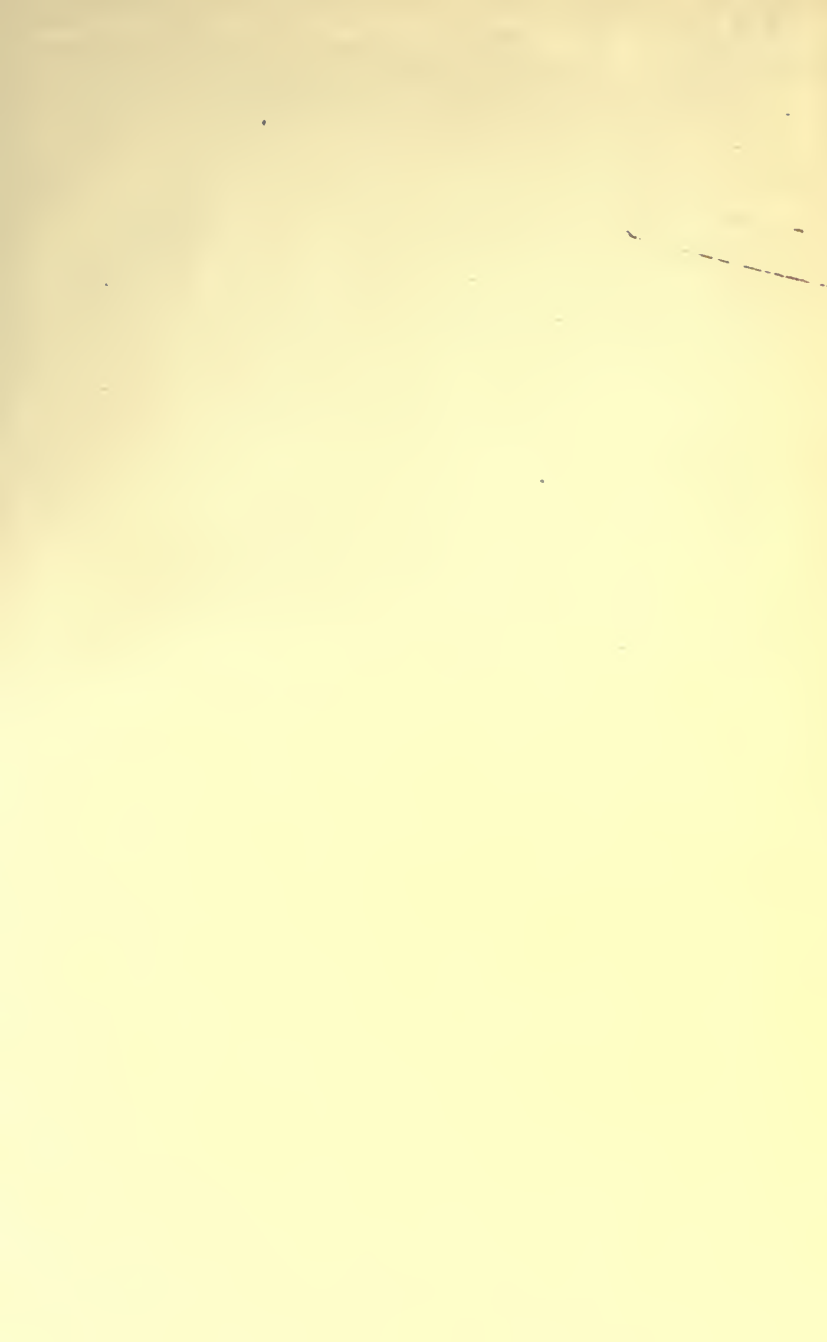






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To Margaret Princess Ghilla  
wid compts  
from Sainprou Walter  
B.A. ch. ch. oton Banister

Oct 9<sup>th</sup> 1908





CARĀDOC: OR THE CHURCH IN  
THE SANDS





# CARĀDOC

OR

## The Church in the Sands

### A LIFE PICTURE

Of England, Ireland, and Cornwall  
before the Romans left Britain

#### ERRATA.

PAGE	15.—Line 26.	For "tranquility" read "tranquillity."
"	78.— " 13.	" "lordom" read "lorddom."
"	92.— " 24.	" " " " " "
"	93.— " 9.	" "hunters" read "hunter's."
"	114.— " 12.	" "battles" read "battle's."
"	139.— " 6.	" "bledst" read "bled'st."
"	148.— " 1.	" "and" read "as."
"	158.— " 15.	" "neither" read "nether."
"	158.— " 32.	" "known" read "know."
"	210.— " 6.	" "fringing-lea" read "fringing lea."
"	214.— " 4.	" "bearskin" read "boarskin."

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PR  
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“About this time Carādacus was King of Cornwall.”

960605



Within the conscience of mankind  
The presence of the soul we find  
Whose understudy is the mind.

*Book XVIII., Lines 733—735.*



## THE PREFACE

FROM boyhood I have always been impressed with the savage grandeur of Perran Porth and that part of the north coast of Cornwall. Who can forget his first glimpse of Perran Bay on a bright summer morning from the top of Callistock Hill, or the last slope on the main road from Truro? The blue majesty of ocean, the giant breakers lapping with foam the base of the sand-hills that slope down to the eastern beach, the bold Gull Rock guarding the entrance to Holywell Bay, all make a picture that must be seen to be realised, and once seen can never be forgotten. The flat sanded beach stretching for miles seems to embody tradition as the cry of the sea gull strikes the traveller's ear. If there had been no Lost Church, one's imagination must still have pictured the relics of a bygone age. But this is not necessary when the place itself teems with evidence of antiquity. Here is Piran's Church. Here is the well of Cuthbert, whose hidden approach mocks the search of the stranger. Here too is Perran Round, all that remains of the old Roman amphitheatre, the only one extant in England, that of Dorchester in Dorset excepted. Here, finally, are the desert sand-hills and the Chapel Rock, severed from the mainland,

but left to tell of the great incoming of ocean that swept away the country where the waves now roll triumphant for a mile or more out at sea. The advance of the invading waves was in this case, as in most other encroachments of the sea, probably the gradual process of ages. But it can scarcely be doubted that there must at one time have been a sudden irruption of the deeps due to seismic causes, and which perhaps occurred at the date of the destruction of the Lyonesse and Earl Godwin's lands in Kent, mentioned in Stow's History and the Saxon Chronicle. Contemporaneous with this incoming of ocean there appears to have been a great inundation of sand at Perran—at least, there has always been a tradition to that effect. More than twenty-five years ago I remember an old man telling me this. We were talking about the sand on the sand-hills when he said, "They say it all came in in one night."

In the great whirlwind of sand disappeared Piran's Church, and the meadows and hamlets adjoining must have been involved in the same catastrophe. Whether, though, the city of Langarrow ever actually existed, as described in Robert Hunt's Legends of Old Cornwall, is open to question. But later day investigation having proved the tradition of the Church, may not the future verify that of the city also? It must be remembered that what was termed a large city in those days we should call a town or perhaps a group of villages now. What else, it may be asked, are some of the so-called Cornish "church towns" of to-day? The fact of such a "city" or town as Langarrow never having been mentioned by the historian is no proof that it never existed. For history is sometimes inexplicably silent as to men, things, and cities. Along the southern coast of Asia Minor and elsewhere the remains of large cities have rewarded the labours of modern explorers,



and some of these cities clearly exceeded in size and importance many others whose existence history has actually recorded.

We know from J. Zofinus that the letters of the Emperor Honorius were addressed to the "cities" of Britain; and, according to Richard of Cirencester, ninety-two considerable towns had arisen in the several parts of our island before the Romans left it. Of these towns thirty-three were distinguished above the rest for their superior privileges and importance, and one or more of them must have been in the west, probably Cornwall itself—then, as now, the chief seat of the tin industry. It may be argued that the choice of the Romans in selecting a site for a town or settlement in Cornwall must have been determined by superior facilities for shipping generally. But the cases of Falmouth and Constantine seem fatal to such a theory. The town of Falmouth, in spite of its celebrated harbour, three hundred years ago had no existence; but the Church town of Constantine was in all probability much as it is now fifteen hundred years ago, before the Romans left Cornwall. The ancient village-towns clearly grew up where the tin operations were considerable. Where the metal was found in large quantities, there the people congregated and the population increased. Thus arose the church town of Constantine on a high hill commanding a great mining district. Thus, too, on our north coast may have arisen the town of Langarrow in a district rich for copper and tin—the home of the great and good man who gave his name to the land and became the patron saint of the tanners. I see, therefore, no reason to doubt the substantial truth of the Langarrow legend, and have adopted it accordingly.

It is no slight proof of the former importance of Perran-Zabuloe that as early as the reign of Edward

the Confessor a Dean and Canonry were established on the lands now covered by the sandhills. That a deanery or monastery ever stood there is no mean evidence the lands were once rich. Monks loved good pasture ! That Piranus also—who, with his fellow pilgrims, had come from Ireland more than six hundred years previous to this date—should have chosen this same spot for his own labours in the promotion of Christianity attests the importance of the district even before the Romans evacuated Cornwall. As the head of the pious band whose mission was to convert Cornwall, Piran could scarcely have chosen so uncentral a place as Perran-Zabuloe to settle in but for the existence of a large population there unconverted. He came to Cornwall no solitary wanderer, but a leader imbued with the doctrines of the Eastern Church whose work was to organise as well as to teach. All the fathers of the Church were not hermits. We may therefore reasonably suppose it was not for solitude's sake he remained at Perran, a spot on the north coast so far removed from his fellow missionaries. An active worker, he pitched his tent where most was to be done, and thus from a populous district influenced his fellow pilgrims by the results he achieved and reported to them from time to time where they were labouring in the same cause.

In describing the coming of Piran and his reception by the Cornish Britons my endeavour has been as far as possible to give a true picture of those times in the west, and represent the saints, Britons, Druids, and Romans as they lived and died. The state of Britain about 300-400 A.D. appears to have been a transition one in two senses. Just as in the time of the Tudors, nearly 1,200 years later, a new faith had supplanted an old one without destroying it, and until the new creed had been accepted in its entirety by the vast majority

of the people, a period of unrest followed—so at this time the history of our island was apparently one conflict between the Christians and the Pagans variable in its results as one party or the other gained the upper hand. If the persecution of Diocletian reminds us of the fires of Smithfield, the Emperor Constantine, said by some to have been born in Britain, appears to our minds another Henry VIII., who assumed the head of a new religious movement to secure his own political position. Nearly a hundred years had passed now since the proclamation of Constantine as Emperor by the soldiers at York, and while Christianity had gained but little ground in the western home of the Druids, the political position in Cornwall, as also throughout Britain, had, owing to the approaching final departure of the Romans, become even more precarious. That exodus of the Romans had already begun, and as one legion after another departed the *proprætors* or legates must naturally have become more than ever dependent on the assistance of the native kings or chiefs for the maintenance of their authority. Previous to this the power of these British chieftains was probably, generally speaking, far more nominal than real. At the same time, there are good grounds for believing that when men of character and of the ancient blood royal, they exercised a considerable influence in the councils of the local governor. Such a one may have been Carādoc, the hero of my tale.

From the County Chronicles in Borlase's "*Antiquities*" we learn that "about this time (360 A.D.) Caradocus the son of Llewellyn was king of Cornwall." Llewellyn was said to have been uncle to Helena, according to the native tradition a Briton woman and mother of Constantine the Great (already mentioned), who advanced Llewellyn to the rank of a Roman Senator. Constantine, whether or not born in Cornwall,

gave his name to one of our church towns, which it has retained to the present day.

As a great hunter and warrior alone Carādoc would have personally commended himself to the Romans, who, whilst too ready to drain our island of its bravest youth for the prosecution of their continental wars, in times of peace must have often accompanied the British chiefs themselves in their hunting expeditions. For the love of sport, though sometimes cruel, was as conspicuous in the Roman as innate in the Briton. The chiefs of both races would therefore find a common field of pleasure and innocent recreation in the healthy pursuit which still does so much to bring almost opposing classes into friendly touch with one another. And it must be admitted the woods of Britain at that time formed no despicable game preserve. Through the virgin forests of our island, from the shores of Cornwall to the highlands of Scotland, roamed the red deer, the roebuck, and the fallow deer. If the bear had disappeared, the boar and auroch still remained to give a spice of peril to the hardy forester who, while anxious to replenish the larder, still loved danger for its own sake. But the hunter's real *pièce de resistance* must have been a well-organised wolf hunt in those good old days. In the icy winters of that colder age many a time our western forefathers were besieged with another foe as bad or worse than King Frost, when, despite the dangers of the Atlantic blizzard, to which Cornwall and the southern part of Devon are even now sometimes specially liable, the whole countryside would as a last resource declare war on the common enemy. It is in the course of one of these wolf-hunts that Lyle, the grandfather of my hero, by the blaze of the camp fire tells his fellow hunters the origin of his race and the coming of the Trojans to Cornwall.

Although the landing of the Trojans in the west rests

on tradition alone, the mineral wealth and scanty population of Cornwall in that age lend some air of probability to a legend which wise men have not hesitated to accept as true. The Phœnicians had discovered Cornwall by 600 B.C. or before, and we know from Strabo they sailed beyond the straits (of Gibraltar) soon after the end of the Trojan War. The object of the Phœnicians was trade, that of the Trojans a new land to settle in; and the Phœnicians being the most skilled navigators of those times, their services as explorers may have been requisitioned by the unfortunate descendants of Priam even a generation or more after the fall of Troy. Whether the tradition of a Trojan lineage be true or not, there can be no doubt that the men Cæsar found here were the bravest of the brave, and that so great a general should have relinquished the task of their subjection would seem to indicate under the conditions then prevailing he judged it impracticable.

The task abandoned by Cæsar was not resumed by Augustus, and it was left for Aulus Plautius and Vespasian to land on our shores in the reign of Claudius a century later. Even then, after seven years' fighting at the head of 50,000 seasoned soldiers, they only succeeded in subduing the country south of the Thames after a series of thirty battles, in which the Romans were not always victorious. Ostorius Scapula, who succeeded Aulus Plautius as *proprætor* of Britain, extended the Roman frontier to the Severn. But even after the final defeat of Caractacus, the undying valour of the Britons still defied the invader, and while Italian vanity was flattered at the sight of our national hero dragged in chains through the streets of Rome, the people who gloated over his capture could barely hold their own in the island from which he had been torn. But science and civilisation have in open field always finally triumphed against primitive peoples struggling

to retain their freedom. Step by step the Romans pressed on to their selfish goal, wading through blood to the slavery of men and the dishonour of women.

Poor Boadecea! Who weeps not now to read her fate? Her life consecrated to liberty, yet still more glorious in her death, the shade of the mighty queen must appeal to the pride of her descendants as long as we remain a nation.

Yes, there were giants in those days. Cæsar and Tacitus tell us the Britons were taller as well as more brave and intellectual than the Gauls, and it seems probable the Western Britons were as superior to the other Britons as the Britons generally were to the Gauls. Why this was so, who shall say? Perhaps because England is an island and distant Cornwall so narrow a peninsula as to be more insular even than England herself! Anyhow, it lies with those who dispute the superiority of the Cornish Britons to explain why they were always the last to be conquered by an invading race. The prolongation of their freedom can scarcely have been due to the indifference of the conquerors or the inaccessibility of the conquered.

For there are no great mountains or rivers in Devon or Cornwall, and it was the mineral wealth of both that first attracted to Britain the Romans, who worked the mines with forced labour as soon as they had established themselves in the west. If it be said the Romans waited till they had secured their position in the south-east and centre of Britain, such an argument cannot apply to the Saxons, who were in England nearly five hundred years before they conquered the Cornish. For until Athelstane's time, the Tamar, according to Camden, was the boundary between the two peoples. Why had not the Saxons conquered Cornwall before? There can be only one answer: they were not strong enough to do it.



As to the courage and character of the Britons generally, it has been well said : "Gaul was conquered by one great effort and retained in subjection without difficulty. Britain, on the other hand, though peopled with a race of kindred origin, was only carried as it were foot by foot and kept under by direct ascendancy of military power." This military superiority of the Romans was only maintained by their habitual practice of drafting abroad for continental garrisons the flower of the British youth, who were permanently retained in the Roman service. As to the rest of the native population, they were most probably, until the later years of the Roman occupation, strictly forbidden the use of arms. No such conditions could have been enforced on the Germans, who had previously been conquered by Rome, Germany being so much larger a country than Britain, and moreover not an island. Those therefore who, like Arnold, have exalted our German at the expense of our Briton ancestry, and assert that Arminius (the liberator of Germany) is far more truly one of our national heroes than Caractacus, have strained facts to prove a theory. We are the direct descendants of the Britons, and if their blood has since mingled with that of Dane, Saxon, and Norman, the success, stability, and endurance of our race is not a little due to that Briton origin. It is true Arminius freed Germany from the Roman yoke, while Caractacus succumbed to it. But if the final success of a general is the only test of military capacity, then Wellington was greater than Napoleon and Scipio superior to Hannibal. But the verdict of posterity has said otherwise, and if the results achieved by Caractacus are estimated by the difficulties that confronted him, it seems to me, with all respect to Arnold, the intelligent Englishman will not compare Caractacus unfavourably with Arminius, or claim a German in preference to a Briton origin.

While the greatness of the Britons has been forgotten, the rule of the Druids was not the unmitigated tyranny it has generally been described. Their power, though despotic, was, I believe, judged by the standard of those times, used mainly for the public good. Hence the antiquity of their sway. For no despotism could otherwise have retained its hold on the affections of the people so long after a new creed and political system had supplanted an old idolatry and the rule of our forest kings. Druidism may have died hard because it had lived so long on its own merits.

The Druids, moreover, were no mere priests. They were the philosophers of antiquity, and famous before the Greeks, who, it has been said, were actually indebted to them and copied from them in many respects. And if their learning was great, their powers of memory were no less exalted. This may be realised when we consider that their religious tenets and customs and morality were embodied in 20,000 lines of metrical verses, which the Vates, or lesser Druids, learned by heart and taught orally to their younger disciples, who in their turn taught them to the next generation. In these verses also were celebrated the memories of departed heroes in the Celtic tongue, and possibly sometimes in ballad rhymes. Whether or not rhyme is an invention of the moderns, as some would have us believe, according to Goldsmith the ancients did not reject it as a blemish when it occurred without the appearance of constraint.

The general knowledge of the Druids was almost unlimited. We have the testimony of Cæsar and Mela as to their familiarity with astronomy, geography, and physics. Their studies also embraced anatomy and botany, the last-named perhaps the favourite pursuit of the fathers of the wood, whose love of nature embraced every herb and flower that grew. Thus from their



youth as the young Druids grew up came that marvellous knowledge of plants and vegetables which extorted the admiration of Pliny and gave them still greater influence over the people they ruled. Physicians of the body and the soul, as much loved for the suffering they allayed as dreaded for the awe and mystery their religious cult inspired, this great order, which stood forth a monument of the past and the wonder of ages has now almost ceased to interest the descendants who have forgotten their fathers existed !

Probably the chief cause of the Druids' lasting power was their persistency in inculcating the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. This was the breath of their life, the heart of their teaching in common with Christ's, and this it was that made the Britons who had been converted to Christianity—as early, maybe, as St. Paul's time—ever ready to relapse again into the ways of the old idolatry. Apart from the hideous rites of human sacrifice, the doctrine of the Christian was not absolutely irreconcilable with that of the Druid, because each believed the soul did not die, and as we had lived on earth so should we be judged hereafter. To the trained mind of the converted Druid the Great Sacrifice may have appeared, on after reflection, even a justification of the practices he had recently discarded. When God had accepted His own Son as a sacrifice, what could there be repugnant to him in the sacrifice of the most beautiful or blameless human beings His servants on earth could still offer up? So a converted Druid may have argued, forgetting that the Almighty's sacrifice was to give the world its chance of salvation ; and human sacrifices by human beings were forbidden by the Jewish prophets and law-givers long before the coming of Christ. From these philosophic doubts arose in the mind of the later Druid or his disciples or followers some mistrust of the efficacy of the new

religion he had espoused, and this led them to wonder whether there were not such points of similarity in both beliefs that the old was, after all, if not the better, at least not altogether inconsistent with the new.

It was thus almost impossible for the converted Druid to throw off completely the shackles of his native superstition, and on those lines I have endeavoured to portray the character of Carausias, who was once a Druid, and in a lesser degree that of Carādoc, my hero, himself also a sincere Christian, but the grandson of a Druid and the son of a Briton who had been brought up in the old faith but afterwards became a Christian.

As to the Romans in Britain at the time of my story, they appear to have been generally, but not all, corrupt. A few were good, most of them bad, some of them very bad indeed. The characters of Livius and Livia are, it is hoped, true to the life. In the father and the daughter the reader has the old Roman virtue and its absolute antithesis. In conclusion, I implore the indulgence of the public in offering them this picture of a bygone age—my first literary venture. My object has been to represent the past as it was or may reasonably be supposed to have been. As the present becomes history, so history itself must become tradition when the written records of a time perish; and, with later discoveries constantly verifying old traditions long generally discredited, who shall deny the truth of any legend at all possible till it is clearly proved to be false?

SAMPSON WATERS.

94, Portsdown Road, W.

*June 25th, 1908.*

## CONTENTS

### BOOK

- I. THE BURIED CITY
- II. THE CHURCH IN THE SANDS
- III. THE COMING OF PIRAN
- IV. THE CONVERSION OF WINGELA
- V. THE WRESTLING MATCH
- VI. CARĀDOC AND THE ROMANS
- VII. THE WOLF-HUNT
- VIII. THE BATTLE
- IX. THE STORY OF SAVRINE
- X. BRENNUS AND BELINUS
- XI. LIVIUS AND LIVIA
- XII. THE GHOST OF CORDELIA
- XIII. THE SAILING OF LIVIUS
- XIV. THE DESPAIR OF LIVIA
- XV. THE PERSECUTION
- XVI. THE VISION OF ST. MICHAEL
- XVII. THE DRUIDS' CAVE
- XVIII. THE DRUID PHILOSOPHY
- XIX. THE DRUID GODS
- XX. THE DEATH OF LIVIA
- XXI. THE PROPHECY OF WINGELA



## PRELUDE

HE who has viewed Atlanta's summer main  
Majestic beat on lone Cornubia's shore,  
Or listened to her billows' rude refrain  
The winds have tuned to winter tempests' roar,  
Where, o'er the waste, the rock-born seamews soar  
Above the gate of Perran's spreading bay,  
Must bid, I deem, his tranced fancy pore,  
And, 'neath the spell of savage beauty's sway,  
Grudge not some thought unto Tradition's early day.

Oh ! who may tell, save he whose eye hath seen,  
The secret glories of that holy spring  
Whose rock-hewn steps, concealed with seaweed  
green,  
The traveller to her living grotto bring ?  
Those pearl-drops cool, ever meandering  
Down her cave-stairs all honeycombed by Time,  
Ooze from a dome that Sappho's muse might sing ;  
For Neptune's tints, empurpling every rime,  
Bespeak the sheen of blue Ægea's softer clime.

And, Strangers, say, who've roamed the sanded  
wild

That whilom rustled to the storm-winds' nod,<sup>1</sup>  
Or he, who roved freely, nature's child,  
At youth's sweet will, across that barren sod,  
Have you not felt the presence of your God,

<sup>1</sup> Before the rushes were planted.

Where the sea-rushes in their prime do wave?  
Nor deemed the shifting soil whereon you trod,  
Whitened with relics from each vanished grave,  
Had sepulchred of old a Briton church's nave?

Then turn towards our Cornish desert's marge,  
And through her mazy windings track thy way  
Till, with its grass-grown circle, loometh large  
An amphitheatre of Roman day.  
Here Druid bards before had kneeled to pray,  
And later sires' untaught dramatic skill  
Disclosed the Guary Mir, or Mystery play,  
To the delight of those who came to fill  
The rounded turf-tiers seven that rose above the hill.

Faded, alas ! our legendary lore,  
And silent now Cornubia's ancient tongue.  
Yet, at this hour, my muse would wake once more  
To melodies no later bard has sung  
The western lyre that long had sleeping hung ;  
If to a tale you fain would hark awhile  
Of how Piranus came to live among  
The dwellers of this many-wooded isle,  
And turned a Pagan race to light of Heaven's smile.

And listen, gentles, to the ballad lay  
Of old Carādoc, from his wattled bower,  
When Briton Kings yet ruled with minished sway,  
Tho' sage authority had still the power  
To curb a nation in its danger hour.  
Let those enamoured of the classic strain  
Encomiums court that critics deign to shower,  
But we will track our island's past again,  
And Druid's skill invoke to shape the warrior strain.

Ours the pure freedom of the forest wild  
And heath-clad moors of old Dunmonium<sup>1</sup> land,  
Through woods untracked whose fastnesses beguiled  
Fearless the boar had roamed from strand to strand,  
And fled the roebuck every wood-lord's band.  
The boar is gone, our forests are no more,  
—What respite might Cornubia's sons command?—  
Only the waves that lap this western shore  
Are left to weep the joys our fathers loved of yore !

<sup>1</sup> Devon and Cornwall, and probably part of Somerset.

## BOOK I.

### THE BURIED CITY.

Perran-in-the-Sands—The Chapel Rock—The Abbey lands—  
Langarrow and her seven churches—The city's doom—Its mineral  
resources and great wealth, which the inhabitants only devoted to  
the enjoyment of every luxury.

NEAR where the well, from out her hallowed cave,  
Peering through gloom, looks on the dark-blue wave,  
High o'er the scarp the sea-born breezes play,  
And greets the seamew ruby-mantled day,  
Hasting to gild Cornubia's rugged shore—  
Hail, spot of God, hail, nurse of sacred lore,  
And you, ye Muses, bless my roundelay,  
If I may deck the turf where Piran lay  
With comely myrtle or one garland green,  
And call the spirits of each vanished scene  
Up from the deeps of yon bespangled main.

Alas ! what 'vails the lowly minstrel's strain  
To hymn the past with melody again?  
Or lives the bard whose song shall grace anew  
Forgotten truths the long hoar ages knew?  
The storm-wind's curse is on the sanded plain  
Commingled with a sterile sod,  
And yellow-hammers pipe their strain  
Around the altar-door of God.



There, in the ken of Cuthbert's ancient steep,  
That looks towards Atlanta's foaming deep,  
Where once were meads and ever-fruitful lands  
A Briton church lay prisoned in the sands.

Behold a desert belt, cold, lonesome, rude,  
'Tis the wild haunt of cheerless Solitude—  
No grassy riches here will meet thine eye,  
No gorse-flower buds nor heather blooms to die,  
Whilst cheated nature yet declines to yield  
Fruit-time and harvest to a barren field.  
A treeless waste, sea-beat, the sand-storm's child  
—Such is the visage of this western wild.

And yet, despite thine arid face,  
Who can but love thee, savage place?  
Oft I have caught the wild bee's hum  
Borne on the zephyrs, soothing come,  
And, when the summer morn is clear,  
The sky-lark's warble you shall hear  
More rich above that barren waste  
Than all the gardens art hath graced.  
The rush-grown bank, the blue weed base  
That blossoms on the desert's face,  
Of all he views the minstrel king,  
Such solitudes he'd ever wing,  
And, from the vault he fearless roves,  
Makes beautiful the waste he loves.

And, as the wild bird still must cleave  
Unto his desert heritage,  
And his free spirit sore would grieve  
The hymn-ground of his sires to leave  
—For what to him the storm-wind's rage  
When other haunts are but a cage,

And solitude alone can bless  
His melodies with loveliness?—  
Even as the warbler, so the bard  
Would glorify his native sward,  
And nature's minstrel faithful dwell  
On mountain-side, or coomb, or fell.  
And on a sand-mount's amber crest  
How sweet in May's bright noon to rest,  
And view like giants from the deep  
The foam-clad billows onward sweep,  
Laving with brine and fleecy spray  
The Chapel rock, where, records say,  
Good monks at eve had kneeled to pray.

The Chapel rock, torn from her home,  
Twice daily washed with ocean's foam,  
How is it still her figure stands,  
Tho' ruin swept the neighbour lands?  
Ages on ages long have rolled  
And many a storm and winter sky,  
And many a wreck beneath her eye  
When morn's first glimmer oft hath told  
The wave-tossed corse beside her cold.  
But still she views yon rushy wold  
And beams 'neath heaven's canopy,  
As if her brow would smile reply,  
—Bathed in the sunlight that bestowed  
Some respite from the storm-fiends' goad—  
And doth she stand? Oh! ask not why,  
Her hoary rock was God's abode.

Then, if the gloaming's shade invite,  
And the night wind's breath doth blow,  
In sunset's gleam of westering light

Across the sand-hills wend thy way—  
'Twas there the abbot held his sway.  
Keen is the air and breezes chill  
Breathe crisp upon the desert still.  
But did the spring winds gently blow  
The stunted herbage scarce would grow  
Where kings had sought the brethren's fold.  
But, in the unwrit days of old,  
It was as fair a spot as e'er  
Did greet the moorland wanderer.  
Then cattle cropped the verdant lea,  
And every herd did pasture free,  
And produce rich the fathers drew  
From choicest meads Cornubia knew,  
And there were fields of golden hue  
Whose harvest rich entranced the eye  
Of every wight that travelled by.  
And now how sunk in grim duress  
The garden fair a wilderness—  
The subject of the ancients' lay  
A thing for sceptics' scoff to-day !

Sad is the change of ripe decay.  
It seems to sweep the past away  
As if its beauties ne'er had been.  
The cheek that fading still doth bring,  
As roses' fast-departing sheen,  
Some memory of its lovely spring,  
May witch the gazer's fancy yet  
Altho' its beauty-star hath set ;  
But if its charm departed all,  
As withered flowerets' petals fall,  
What stranger who had never seen  
A rose-bud bursting from its green  
Would guess the glory that had been?

So looms the visage of this waste.  
 Her pristine comeliness effaced  
 There is no likeness to untomb  
 Some semblance of her virgin bloom.  
 And thankless 'tis again to bring  
 The distant past in fresh array,  
 Or wander by the Muses' spring  
 Where pure Castalia<sup>1</sup> seeks the day.  
 Yet at sweet Clio's<sup>2</sup> hest I'll strive  
 Tradition's memories to revive,  
 And if of critics some there be  
 To doubt the muse of history  
 To Ocean's<sup>3</sup> Court I'll take my plea.  
 They say the sea in one night came  
 To blast for aye the valley's fame—  
 Some ruption of the deeps perchance,  
 Or had Atlanta eyed askance  
 The tranquil bosom of a mead  
 So suited to her matchless speed?  
 I know not, nor hath mortal known  
 Wherefore the blue waves left their home—  
 Not even the wisest whelmed in foam,  
 The dead who rest, our Briton sires  
 Beneath Langarrow's seven spires.

The waves rushed on, the vasty deep  
 Rose like a giant fresh from sleep.  
 There was no barrier to assuage  
 Each onset of the deluge' rage—  
 But when the seas had wreaked their will  
 Came there a day of deathly still,  
 A breathless calm that boded ill,

<sup>1</sup> The fountain of the Muses.

<sup>2</sup> The Muse of History.

<sup>3</sup> The father of Clio.

Ere storm-winds swept an angry sky,  
And to the vault went up a cry  
Of a lost people's agony.

It smote the blue, it filled the air,  
That frenzied scream of wild despair !  
The matron chaste, the maiden fair,  
The neat-herd pasturing on the plain,  
The infant from the breast was ta'en  
To join the father wept in vain.  
A sudden end, a secret tomb,  
Such was a city's fated doom,  
When all who baulked the cruel wave  
Found in the sands a ready grave.

Many a dune since then hath grown,  
And many a relic swept away,  
And you this tale had never known,  
Nor had I tuned my western lay,  
Had not tradition made her own  
The story of that ruin-day.  
And, as a traveller from afar,  
Or soldier, fresh from foreign war,  
Tells of the poles or torrid zone,  
And risks his hearers ne'er had known,  
But he himself had faced alone,  
With native wit his lips enchase  
And deck the tale with varied grace  
That unbelievers fain would mar,  
So doth the minstrel's art proceed,  
And I must onward gently lead  
Not knowing if the time doth need  
To sing Langarrow's ancient race,  
And how a clan of favoured breed  
Fell from their former height of grace.

They were a people heaven-blest  
Since Rome had left their fathers free  
And that far garden of the west  
To native skill of husbandry.  
And theirs the harvest of the main,  
Such as the sea-bathed caverns deign.  
Oft when the evetide wind blew fair  
Borne on the fragrant summer air  
Was heard the fishers' rude refrain  
Bidding past glories come again,  
And their rich voices' mellow song  
Their early forbears' deeds prolong  
Or chant from night's noon till the day  
Some record of the Druids' sway.

But after Night, whose ebon wing  
Had silenced all the birds that sing,  
No longer frowned upon a world  
Bright with the dews of morn impearled,  
And Phœbus, clad in purple vest,  
Had called the mariners from rest,  
Glad was the sun-god's welcome sweet  
That lit the crystal at their feet,  
Sparkling with gold and blue—the hem  
Of ocean's western diadem.  
Soon with the dawn their task complete  
The snow-white sails are homeward set,  
Ashore they trail the dripping net  
Whose meshes gleaming silver-bright  
Awake a watching crowd's delight.

But if unfriendly skies did frown  
Earth's hidden treasures still their own.  
The red-tinged quartz, the massy ore  
Ofttimes a daughter's portion bore

For dower to a wealthy lord,  
And many a matron's bosom wore  
Such gems as eastern climes afford—  
Rare jewels from a foreign strand  
Bought with the produce of this land.

Years roll along, the rich man's store  
Increaseth daily more and more—  
Riches untold, the devil's ware,  
Man's idol and a woman's snare,  
Thy curse is as the tempter's wand  
That tainted Eden's virgin air.  
Oh ! why was such a pleasant land,  
The Fates had blessed at God's command,  
And wedded to the arts of peace,  
Twofold secure in nature's lease—  
This western land of sweet content  
Heaven's bounty to our sires had lent—  
Why was this fruitful wooded shore  
In thralldom to the vile given o'er?  
Still adds the lordling to his store,  
With feast and bout the hillsides ring.  
There was no pity for the poor  
When *much* would *more*, and ruthless bring  
The needy man to reckoning.  
Deeper and deeper with the time,  
And all the *zeal* that converts may,  
Unblushing, in the light of day,  
They copy 'neath their glamour gay  
The follies of a softer clime,  
Till purity became a crime,  
And Virtue wept her own decay !  
  
For with that affluence idlesse came,  
And all the vices in her train.

Long time the orphan cried in vain  
Whilst gilded portals ope amain  
To shameless dames the host doth call  
To grace his glittering festival.  
But who of all the throng that passed  
On Satan's mission deep intent—  
Who had discerned the coming blast  
Or High God's anger mused anent?  
Alas ! the sands of time have run ;  
What boots the plunder craft hath won ?  
What recks the spoil of ages now ?  
A few more suns and then the last  
Shall set upon the valley's brow.

But fair Langarrow, doomed to woe  
I think I see thy glories now,  
As the shadows come and go—  
A white-walled city looming clear  
On the verge of ocean's mere,  
Bathed in gold the day's last smile  
Lingers on thy face awhile,  
Till a warning portent seen  
Overarched thy meadows green,  
And thy last sun crimson-red  
Angry sought his ocean bed.  
Thou wert beautiful as erst—  
Comely as a bride should wed—  
Only for thy children cursed.  
There were none to intercede,  
Or God's anger ne'er had burst  
On thy churches in the mead.  
'Neath the deeps each spire lies hid  
In a sanded pyramid,



And thy meadows every one  
Like a dream have fled and gone !

But, as I stand on yonder shore,  
Listening while sad billows pour  
Ocean's music on the tide,  
Above the vault my thought would veer  
To the upper ether clear,  
Asking of each spangled star  
Sparkling from its world afar  
To recall how in thy pride,  
Youth and plenty at thy side,  
Fresh and beauteous thou hadst died.  
Do the blue waves rippling on  
Where thy face as morning shone—  
Do Atlanta's billows know  
The loveliness that sleeps below?  
I trow not, but her bosom lies  
A mirror oft to moonlit skies,  
And the wavelets' foam beneath  
Circles like a watery wreath,  
Ocean's tears for ever flow.  
Still must æons silent go,  
Infant billows ripple slow,  
Cradled in their ocean bed  
Till the seas give up their dead.

But we will meantime ponder o'er  
Dim tradition's treasure store,  
And in fancy's vision mourn  
Our buried city Briton-born,  
For there is music in the name  
That speaks her once unsullied fame  
And, tho' beneath the western sea,  
Langarrow thou art fair to me.

## BOOK II.

### THE CHURCH IN THE SANDS.

In the time of the Stuarts the son of a Cornish lord on the spot where the church or oratory was afterwards discovered in 1838 is pictured asking the winds to tell him the story of Her disappearance.

YEARS after, when unnumbered moons  
Had followed on succeeding noons,  
And stories of the city's bale  
Had ceased to be the old men's tale,  
Upon the Sandhills' shelving dome  
An artless swain did musing roam.  
Ruddy was he, and heir of all his line,  
And 'neath his locks bright as the gold-reef fine  
A father's valour sparkled in his eyne.

And rich his mind with learning's store,  
And legends of Cornubia's lore  
—A mind more prone to dwell upon  
The fresh delights of Helicon,  
And teach the muses to his son,  
Than boast of battles he had won—  
And he could pipe his morning lay  
Clear as the throstle hymns the day.  
Or as, long ere the dawn appear,  
From some green bush or coppice near,  
The nightingale the night doth cheer,  
Full as the music of her richest lay  
His voice untutored chased the hours away.

More pensive than his wont of late,  
And brooding o'er his country's fate  
—For he had wept with many a sting  
The fortunes of his fallen King<sup>1</sup>—  
It chanced, this Junetide morn I sing,  
Past Fenton Berran's sacred spring,  
Footsore, and troubled with the time's unrest,  
He'd pillowed on the desert's welcome breast.

There from a couch of sand his eye might mark  
Far on the seas the home-returning barque,  
—Freighted to full with spicery of Ind  
Gaily she wings and leaves the waves behind—  
Or, if he willed, his tuneful ear could drink  
The wild bird's warble on the cliffside brink,  
Making his noon-song to the slumbering deep.

“There's melody on every steep  
Where e'er God's worshippers have been,  
The shrubless acre that was green  
A songster ne'er shall lack to sing  
His welcome to returning spring.  
Thou sacred soil Piranus blest,  
Say, is thy past forgot for aye?  
Who would not be the desert's guest,  
Or woo thee on a summer day?”

So mused the childe, still gazing on the bay  
Whose blue tranquility before him lay,  
Scarce ruffled by the zephyrs' waning breath,  
And calmly silent like the soul in death,  
Unseen but living on each wavelet bore  
To reach the confines of an unknown shore.  
Long pondered he, in cool of breezes frail,  
Upon the tinnings' oft-repeated tale,

<sup>1</sup> Charles I.

And elden stories noised abroad that told  
A House of God beneath the barren mould,  
Till day-dreams soothing to his vision came,  
As if his soul, untaught, the place could name  
Where, in God's time, hereafter one should trace  
The long-lost church unto her resting-place.  
Whereat he smiled, with care no more oppressed,  
And with glad voice and guileless mien confessed  
To the blue vault his melody addressed.

• "Ye truant winds whose wanton soft caress  
Toys with the bosom of this wilderness,  
And you, ye zephyrs, prithee, breathe reply  
That blithesome frolic in the noontide sky :  
How came the Church so many saints had blest  
So hapless vanished to Her earthly rest?  
Time out of mind Her children sigh in vain  
And count the days when She shall come again.  
For all our bards in melodies have wept  
And fruitless sought where Holiness hath slept.  
What fate untold, what mystery is this?  
Say me, ye winds, nor deem my plaint amiss."

And all the zephyrs answered with a kiss,  
"The western sea with ever-pouring flood  
Menaced the land where church and hamlets stood,  
Ruthless advancing with her mighty weight,  
Her white-mained coursers leaping ocean's gate,  
And the fresh greensward deluged with their foam.  
Till father Neptune, from his troubled home,  
His swirling quicksands heaps upon the strand,  
And curbs the billows with a master hand.  
Just as a bulwark circling some domain  
A fence he reared to shelter Piran's fane,

And lordly mountains set around Her brow  
Where boldest waves might never hope to flow.  
Wide was the ruin of that cruel time  
Unbeautified with even a minstrel's rhyme.  
Oh! would some singer rise whose verse should  
weld

The bygone scenes these faithful eyes beheld,  
Departed glories should relumined be  
And rift the cloud of ancient mystery.

" Meantime the seas' unwearying toil  
Found in the fount a ready spoil.  
The well,<sup>1</sup> whose healing power to save  
Cuthbert<sup>2</sup> of hallowed memory gave,  
Atlanta laps with curling wave.  
Each day her eddying waters wide  
The spring would whelm with every tide,  
But ebb on ebb the briny sluice  
At Ocean's bid compelled to truce  
The vanquished deep with sullen sigh  
Retiring leaves the cavern dry.

And all her waves, baulked of their holy prey  
Their vanquished force exhaust in Piran's Bay,  
As wearied with the ruin she had made  
Atlanta calls in others to her aid.  
And of allies she did entreat the most  
Caurus<sup>3</sup> the tyrant of the Cornish coast,  
That he would exercise his cruel boast  
And call his minions from the angry deep.

" He, waking from a long-protracted sleep,  
Forthwith espied the golden-mantled heap,

<sup>1</sup> At Holywell.

<sup>2</sup> Hence Cubert.

<sup>3</sup> The north-west wind.

The whileom bed of all the Nereid train,  
And, casting round him one more look again,  
His breath directs upon the passive pile,  
With cunning's force and every crafty wile,  
Much as a Monster from the vasty deeps,  
When all is still and tired nature sleeps,  
Forbears awhile his presence to make known  
Till such time as the victim is his own.  
So was the case our voices now bemoan.  
For ever ruth from tender heart would burst  
And Pity weeps the innocent amerced.

"Efforts redoubled for a time had freed  
The Church from Caurus' all-devouring greed.  
Baffled a while askance he proud retires  
To feed in silence hot revengeful fires.  
Slowly his winding cavern-home to seek  
And nurse the vengeance he may after wreak.  
His season come, forth from their sea-green cove  
He and his fellows angry, whistling rove,  
Vying with rage each one more fleet would run  
To crown the ruin they had erst begun.  
T'was then Piranus' sacred door,  
Of all the storm-brood smitten sore,  
Wrapt in the shroud that kindly Neptune gave  
Had safety sought in shelter of the grave."

Thus sung the zephyrs to the curious swain  
Who eager listened to their soft refrain  
Whilst the sweet calm of early summertide  
His youthful muse with holy lore supplied,  
And carolled he upon his homeward way  
The fragment of a Briton shepherd-lay,  
As mid the shades gray-kirtled evening cast  
Dwelt his last thought upon the deathless past.

A thousand moons nine times their course have rolled,  
The holy spring yet sparkles as of old,  
The winds and waves, with slow-encroaching sway,  
Have swept asunder more than one cliff way.  
The hillocks girt with ever-shifting sand  
Their name have added to the desolate land,  
And still the Church slept in a secret bed,  
Alive though resting with Her ancient dead.  
But of Her fate there was no trace,  
Or tomb above the Sleeper's face  
To tell the world of holy ground.  
Only a sand-hill's taller mound,  
Lording it o'er his fellows round,  
Her dim, age-hallowed story seemed to tell  
To those who'd studied Her traditions well.  
And such believed the towering hillock there  
His going to guide whose pious hand should dare  
To lift the sand-veil from the cumbered lea,  
And set a buried tabernacle free.  
And with bright zeal oft-times they fain  
Piranus' lowly walls would gain.  
Alas ! what might their zeal avail  
To cheat the malice of the gale?  
Why tell of blighted hopes that grew  
The love-dream of the faithful few—  
The faithful few who still hoped on  
When every sun delusive shone  
And in their courses stars had fought  
To hide the dome for ages sought?  
Think how, despite the worldling's sneer,  
Their Church to them for ever dear,  
And, toiling long to pierce the sod,  
A cry went up unto their God

That dayspring yet might visit them,  
Or they might touch Her garment's hem  
And wake the Sleeper in Her grave!

Yet dawn was near that ne'er so far had seemed  
As when true faith its vision reckless dreamed—  
Brief is the compass of the greatest change  
When things unborn are shaping to their range,  
Months that were years now but as days are seen,  
Another day bursts on the vital scene.  
'Tis morning, on the valley wood and green  
An autumn sun with eastern glories shone,  
As with the light from Heaven's jaspered throne,  
Mantling the moorlands with a radiance shed  
Whose growing ray the waning stars had fled.  
The new-born light with purpled joyance fills  
The latent beauties of the gorse-capped hills.  
And crops ungarnered under forest trees,  
The tors, the pastures, and the late-mown leas,  
Fanned into fragrance with a western breeze,  
In diamond livery, all dew-spangled lay,  
And every rivulet on its babbling way  
Sparkles a welcome to the god of day.

The morn has come and died unwept.  
The sun-god's jaded steeds have swept  
Their course o'er Piran's tomb unkept.  
And day is faint and night must steep  
The sun-parched earth—while from the deep  
The north-winds rock the pines to sleep—  
But hark upon the breeze again  
Is borne the tramp of coming men.  
Say, barren lands, for you must know,  
Say, dead-sea crops, that never grow,



Is it the measured tread of them who wend  
Behind the bier of some departed friend?  
Or troop they on a floral meed to pay  
The open grave of early yesterday?  
There is no grave, there is no bier,  
There are no mourners to appear.  
But, on the sand-hills, wafted near,  
The voice of those who sing we hear,  
Men, women, children from the cottage run,  
To view the spoils a pious hand hath won,  
Gathered from hamlets far and near to see  
The Lost One found, the Ancient-bound set free.

The Church no longer prisoned in Her cell  
Now to the simoon-warder bade farewell.  
Her time-worn hallowed lineaments  
She to Her children now presents  
As perfect in their native symmetry  
As when first fashioned for a sanctuary,  
Tho' roof had early vanished at the date  
Of ruin when She bowed Her head to fate,  
Buried alive securely She had lain  
Beneath the mantle of the wide sand plain,  
As if Her brow had never known  
The gloom of countless ages flown.

Like garden closed or fountain sealed  
Her pleasant form to light revealed  
Up from the wilderness had come,  
Or, as the turtle near her home,  
In rock-clefts deep constrained to hide,  
Fast in her secret place will bide  
Until the fowler wend his way,  
And tyranny has passed away,

So, now the time hath brought release,  
And safety points the path of peace,  
In fadeless beauty fresh arose  
God's temple free of all Her foes.

Built on a rock Her hoary walls sustain  
The quiet pressure of a moving plain,  
Through all Her apertures the kind sea-sand  
Had touched Her body with its friendly hand,  
And girt Her with a gently circling belt,  
As snowdrift soft by victim never felt.  
Her antique limbs cemented with rude clay  
Were of the early dawning Christian day;  
And of the fane—that perfect love did rear—  
Whose pristine casements built to cast out fear,  
Had smiled on dawn in roseate raiment clear,  
Two openings in the walls disclosed to view  
The rustling breath of heaven faintly drew.  
But whether windows erst within had lain,  
Doubts of the wise, disputed long-a-day  
Befitteth not my modest muse to say.  
Certain it is all light had sparing come  
To worshippers beneath that humble dome.  
But of the troop that thither flocked, to pay  
Knee-tribute, and their maker's bounty pray,  
Perchance had poured with parting of the days  
In twilight's wane their harmonies of praise,  
By blaze of native rush-wicks, fashioned rude,  
In semblance of the ancient custom crude,  
When in God's city and fair Cyprus' isle  
Nor knelt nor prayed they save in torch-lit aisle,  
And so Piranus' followers had no need  
Of daylight's aid to celebrate their creed.

A narrow doorway, graceful and ornate,  
Retained the neatness of that antique date  
When pristine sculpture decked the wall and gate,  
Reared by the native cunning of a time,  
When faith had copied with a love sublime  
The architecture of an eastern clime.  
Upon it zigzags, arrowlike in line  
With Egypt's subtlety were chiselled fine.  
Its tiny arch, round-headed, high preserved,  
Whose savage beauty never had deserved  
So long entombment in a sandy bed,  
With key-stone fashioned like a leopard's head,  
Just as a figure risen from the dead  
Those visions clear the Hebrew seers divined  
Or old-world miracles did call to mind.  
And firmly planted in the niches gray  
Two human heads sculptured securely lay,  
As if fresh roused from some protracted sleep,  
Or wakened by the moaning of the deep,  
And, gazing from the antique lowly walls,  
Where they had been the cruel sandstorm's thralls,  
Seemed ready to resume their old command  
Over the barren wilderness of sand.

Now had the sun, his glorious going waned,  
Full spent with toil his ocean-bed regained,  
Purpling the east with crimson as he went  
In pity for the dark world's dreariment.  
But in the dusk his dying rays illumed  
Success's task the exploring band resumed,  
'Neath stars repentant shining now to guide  
The labour fates ungentle had defied.  
And where, hard by the hallowed casement near,  
The Church now from her chancel end might peer,

Soon is revealed a Briton altar-tomb,  
Deep in the soil whereon the ebon gloom  
Of old antiquity had spread a cloud  
And veiled the slab for ages with its shroud.

And in the tomb three skeletons they see,  
The wardens of its living history :  
The first a man's, of vast proportions clear,  
Beside his friend, as friends had laid him near ;  
The third a woman's, now to mortal eye  
Between her bones the others twain did lie'  
—Down in the sand-grave given by the deep  
Without a grass or flower above to keep  
Still undisturbed they slept their last long sleep.

<sup>1</sup> Literally true. When the church was discovered the remains were thus found.

The Muse from hence her western flight must wing  
To seek the glades that fringe Fuaran's spring,  
And brooding fond her silver pinions spread  
Above the home of Erin's honoured dead.  
I know not if those groves retain their pristine green  
Or sweet Fuaran purling from its bed be seen  
For Time to ruin forests hoar will bring  
Where woodmen's axe was never wont to ring,

And many a brook whose well-head scorned to fail  
No longer saunters through its ancient vale.  
But if nought liveth of the lake to greet  
Let memory treasure fanciful and sweet  
The beauties of the father's lost retreat,  
And whisper we as if we stood  
Beside the very mere,  
"Fuaran in the wood  
Piranus' home was here."

## BOOK III.

### THE COMING OF PIRAN.

Piran, whose father is chief of the Osrig clan, is educated at Rome, but rather than remain there prefers to return home to Ireland to preach primitive Christianity to his fellow countrymen. At first the Irish receive him favourably, and are charmed with his eloquence and description of Italy and the Italians. But as soon as he ventures to chide the barbarism and heathendom into which so many of the tribes had relapsed or adhered to, he is severely handled by the infuriated chiefs (among whom is his own father) and left for dead on the moor by Jacob's Stone!<sup>1</sup> Here, with death fast approaching, Piran vows to God if his life is spared to convert his father he will devote it altogether to God's service and the conversion of the heathen in other lands. The first part of his prayer is soon answered. He is rescued from death by a swineherd of his own clan.

MANY a vanished æon flown,  
As records sure have handed down,  
Before the modern infidel  
The pagan's chorus learned to swell,  
Or deist' scoff and sceptic's frown  
The truths of ages dare disown,  
Or learned men, devoid of guile,  
Under the wing of science smile  
At sacred lore's antiquity,  
There dwelt in Erin's distant isle  
A holy man of high degree.

<sup>1</sup> Reputed to have been brought from Palestine. On it the Irish Kings were crowned.

Tho' young in years much-travelled he,  
And southern lands did somewhere roam,  
Not for delights the many think  
Far from their native soil to drink  
Unshackled by restraints of home,  
Nor in the harmless mode of some  
Who, in youth's spring of jollity,  
Do voyage other lands to see;  
But as his country's need did call,  
So sojourned he in foreign hall,  
Under Italia's fairest sky,  
Where wisdom's lamp yet glorious shone,  
Did homage to her sovereignty  
And humbly sat at learning's throne.

But, when enriched with knowledge' store,  
And studied deep in Christian lore,  
Beloved of all, the schools' delight,  
He seemed to men the destined light  
To illumine his adopted land,  
And held a kingdom in his hand,  
His great heart yearned with love to free  
His pagan brethren over sea.

So 'spite the troubles of the time  
That clouded Erin's gentle clime,  
This scion of a regal line,  
Upon the sweetness of whose tongue  
Italia's wisest fondly hung,  
Ready to front the heathen's rage,  
And blessed with all that pious age  
Deemed needful to a pilgrimage,  
With tranquil brow and steadfast eye  
That gazed toward the sun noon-high,

Awaits the galley on the strand  
 To bear him to lerna land.  
 —And he was of the Osrig clan,  
 Piranus hight,<sup>1</sup> or Kieran,<sup>2</sup>  
 Fresh from the lap of scholared Rome,  
 Nor feared the hand of any man  
 When God's had beckoned home.

\* \* \* \*

Loud rang the shout on Erin's shore  
 Whereto the Roman galley bore,  
 And throng the clans from east and west  
 That for a foeman find a guest,  
 One of their land and royal blood  
 Whose kinship stayed their warrior mood;  
 Or chiefs had hasted from afar  
 To light the torch of Celtic war  
 And many a bard had fanned the flame  
 That battles for an honoured name.  
 For there were rumours in the land  
 Of dread invasion Picts had planned,  
 Nor loved the rude kernes<sup>3</sup> of that time  
 The children of another clime  
 When every stranger seemed a foe  
 And they as spies who come and go,  
 When scarce homecomers to the land  
 Suspectless gain their native strand.

But young Piranus all did greet  
 And chiefly for his bearing sweet  
 Whose welcome softened looks as bold  
 As ever giant sung of old.

<sup>1</sup> Old English—named.

<sup>2</sup> Or Keverne.

<sup>3</sup> Irish foot-soldiers.



His mien was fair, his glance so clear  
Into the future seemed to peer,  
And in his voice a music pure  
Whose melody will ofttimes lure  
And charm an audience friendly grown  
Long ere the speaker's tale be known.  
And soon they made a circle round  
The confines of an ancient mound,  
And bade him from the barrow say  
What chance had brought him to their bay,  
As clustering massed a bright array  
Of bards and warriors, young and old,  
To hearken to the tale he told.

He sung the seas and brighter skies,  
And other lands' festivities,  
Where native richness of the soil  
Ungrudging pays the peasant's toil.  
Far in the clefts of distant peaks  
His winter haunt the eagle seeks  
—The cloud-kissed mount with lordly brow,  
Crowned with eternity of snow,  
That longs for summer winds to blow  
The scents of olive yards below—  
And orange-groves that glistening shine,  
—The vineyard of the Apennine;  
Rock-hearted peaks, the fragrant pine  
In leafen garment ever green.

Or in the woodlands' sheltered dene  
The violet in her thousands seen,  
Hiding meek in mossy bed  
Near some rivulet's fountain-head,  
And those lakes with crystal pool  
Nestling deep in valleys cool,

Say, O wanderer, long a day  
Lingering on enchanted way—  
Say, O wanderer, say with me  
Who Italia's joys would flee?

"It is," said he, "a pleasant land  
Teeming with plenty; nature's hand  
Won her a garland from above,  
A flowered wreath that Heaven's love  
Perennial on her breast hath lain.  
And he who seeks Italia's plain  
A race will find for good or ill  
As generous as the soil they till,  
Kind to the stranger from afar  
Nor lust-fed by the fiends of war,  
But ever willing swift to heed  
Mentions of a higher creed.  
Gently they greet with courtesy  
The prince or peasant, low or high,  
Who see not with them eye to eye;  
And of their learning, I, who late  
Have dwelt within the city's gate,  
Do testify of sages there  
Their wisdom is beyond compare."

So Piran, and his honeyed word,  
With willing ear the people heard,  
And voices loud their plaudits threw  
That he would fain his song renew.  
He, deeming well to gratify,  
Yet not as eager to reply,  
Their rising ardour silent fed  
The more to fan desire's flame  
Till all did marvel fancy-led,  
And, to the barrow of the dead,

Ierna's<sup>1</sup> kings entreating came,  
And high-born damsels in their train,  
Crave of his muse another strain

Then o'er his locks of ebon hue  
A dove unseen the Spirit flew  
And breathed on him with Holy breath  
To dare the pagan to the death ;  
And on his face there shone a smile,  
As if an angel for the while  
Unasked had lent celestial aid  
And Piran urged " Be not afraid,  
For I am with thee on this isle."  
—And they, who hearkened for his lay,  
Proud of the freedom ages gave  
Whose only limit was the wave,  
Sprung from a race whose hallowed line  
Unbroken<sup>2</sup> mocked destroying time,  
Strong in allegiance love alone  
Ungrudging yields the monarch's throne,  
In the spring morning's pleasant ray  
Their warring hosts enraptured lay.

How oft in life's affairs is seen  
The man of parts and prudence' mien  
Whose wit more ready than his peers'  
O'errules his elders' riper years.  
In peace and arms youth has its share  
In moulding things the shape they are.  
The prizes of the earth have gone  
Sometimes to boys of twenty-one<sup>3</sup> ;

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, Ireland's.

<sup>2</sup> The pedigrees of the Irish Kings profess to penetrate farther into antiquity than any other record except the Jewish.

<sup>3</sup> Augustus Cæsar, Alexander the Great, the younger Pitt.

For History's page who runs may read,  
In war and statecraft it befalls,  
Genius commands a thousand thralls ;  
And he who early learns to lead  
Will never lack a foe to bleed  
Or friends to follow where he calls.

But if the son whose potent hand  
Redeems his stricken fatherland  
And the fresh vigour of his mind  
Despair in chains of iron bind,  
How if his lips imploring plead  
The beauties of another creed?  
When valour grants the land's desire  
Can all the blaze of genius' fire  
Mould to the faith the erring sire,  
Or is there ought success may say  
To turn the old man from his way?

Ah ! No, tho' avarice prompt to gain,  
And stern ambition strive amain  
To pluck the fruit of fortune's tree,  
Tho' love entreat, or fear compel  
With visions of a blacker hell,  
As long as rivers seek the sea  
Of every nation you shall see  
Of Infidels or Christians—few  
Forsake the faith their fathers knew.  
And ask not, why? disconsolate,  
Nor weep the beauties man hath marred—  
'Tis written in the book of fate  
That old-time creeds die hard.

Such was the lesson, cruel, stern,  
Piranus was that day to learn,

Beaten with many stripes to show  
The Osrig's fervour——so  
His father welcomed his return.  
Long past the crimson wane of day  
Sore wounded on the wold he lay,  
Left dying on the moor-path lone  
To breathe his last by Jacob's stone.<sup>1</sup>

The stone of fate, how cold it stood,  
And glistened in the moonlight flood,  
The stone of destiny that brings  
Unbroken sovereignty to Kings  
And Queens crowned on it, who believe  
The secret power they receive.  
It stood so clear upon the wold,  
That relic of the ages dim,  
Piranus marked its moon-lit rim,  
And wondered, as his blood ran cold,  
How father Jacob chose, he'd read.  
So bleak a pillow for his head.  
And then he called to mind the tale  
—Jehovah's help shall never fail—  
Of Jacob's vow, made by the stone,  
Where he had friendless lain alone.  
And musing thus, no more afraid,  
Though faint to death, Piranus prayed,

“ If God be with me, and allow  
Deliv'rance to his servant now,  
And grant, when I have found release,  
I reach my father's house in peace.

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards taken to Scotland, where it was detained and served as the inauguration stone of the Scottish Kings. Edward I. brought it to England, and it is still used in the coronation of our Kings.

Then for the years that I shall live  
My life unto my God I give  
To fearless teach His just commands  
And preach the Word in other lands.”  
So Piran prayed tho’ racked with pain  
Believing prayer is not in vain  
And nought availeth swifter than  
The fervour of a righteous man.

There was a swine-herd of the clan  
Who, when his summers yet were few,  
Had taught Piranus all he knew  
Of woodcraft and the fallow deer,  
The joys of forestry, and how  
To bend aside the greenwood bough.  
And learned the Osrig without fear  
To trick the wild boar raging near.  
Many a merry noon was theirs,  
Many a night too black with cares  
Save where to safely sound the horn,  
And gain the camp they’d left at morn.  
Years after in a forest glade  
The swineherd’s kindness Piran paid  
With succour ’gainst a tribesman nude  
With whom their clan was then at feud.  
So that spring evening when once more  
Piranus trod his native shore  
The herdsman’s heart was very sore  
To stand and see so sad an end  
Of him he gladly would befriend,  
The master wounded, left for dead,  
For whom he would himself have bled !  
But, though the boldest of the bold,  
And trained to battle from of old,  
Still silent on the path he stood ;

For he had marked his clansmen's mood  
And, knowing well their anger pale,  
What could the stoutest arm avail  
Three hundred others to assail?  
Much less a swineherd hurl the gage  
To chieftains and their vassals' rage!  
A cold sweat chilled his brow like dew,  
Silent he suffered—for he knew  
One word of sorrow, e'en a tear,  
Had found him also soon a bier.  
So smothering grief that yearned to weep  
He followed slowly up the steep  
Where now another dying day  
Shone on the Osrigs' homeward way.  
But when, nine furlongs from the sea,  
They reached at length the very tree  
Where Piran's hand had set him free,  
He called to mind again the day  
Of his deliverance, when with glee  
Blithe as the light together they  
Had gathered beech-masts on the lea,  
And gazing on the fresh green boughs  
'Neath which his charges loved to browse  
His conscience pricked him now that he  
Had not returned howe'er bestead  
To pay the last rites to the dead.

But little now he paused to think,  
Tho' hovering yet on danger's brink.  
Another moment watching till  
A sudden turning of the hill  
Conspiring with the gloaming threw  
His form beyond his clansmen's view.

Another, and, like lightning's flash,  
He crossed the footpath where an ash  
Hollow and hoar with age had grown.  
Here waiting breathless, pale with fear,  
But catching every breeze's moan,  
He hides in safety, just to see  
If angry voices meet his ear,  
Or he should unmolested be.  
And, finding none pursued his flight,  
Into the darkness of the night,  
Before the moon her shadow threw,  
On Mercy's errand fast he flew.



## BOOK IV.

### THE CONVERSION OF WINGELA.

Piran with Kimbath the converted swineherd makes his home by the Lake Fuaran in the heart of Ireland, whence at the peril of their lives they preach and convert the tribes around to Christianity.

At the same time they inaugurate a movement against the Irish bards, whose license and increasing numbers had become a pest to the whole country.

Among the last to reject Paganism are Piran's father and his mother Wingela, who now receive him kindly at their ancient stronghold, after which, led by the blind harper Carolan, they and the clan are baptised in the stream that flowed from the lake.

Seven years after, Piran, mindful of his vow, sails for Cornwall to convert the Western Britons with a band of pilgrims he had himself chosen.

UNDER midsummer's torrid ray  
A lake, whose bosom scarcely heaved  
To greet the zephyr it received,  
Shone fulgent in the June-born day.  
It flashed the sun's returning beam  
Far from its mirror, like a dream  
Reflecting every passing shade  
The heavens on its waters made,  
And now was blue and now was gray,  
As here and there a cloud or two  
Mantling with ever-varying hue  
The snow-faced circle of the blue  
Rolled onward in the vault of day.

Slow from its banks where sedges grew  
The startled moor-hen sometimes flew,  
And by a brook, whose pebbled gleam  
Burst into music on the scene,  
An auroch wandering up the stream  
Would bend his summer thirst to slake,  
Or seek the pasture of the green  
Where spreading oaks above were seen,  
Shading the sultriness of day  
From briar-roses and the may.  
The stream sang on, the forest lake,  
Girt with as many alders grey  
And loving nature for her sake  
Between the wardens of the brake  
A willing prisoner smiling lay.  
Fair was the spot, and, ever since  
The coming of a native prince,  
Who made it once his hunting-camp,  
Had given it a regal stamp,  
Others of less august degree,  
But eager to ape royalty,  
From time to time had fished the lake  
And launched their corraghs on its stream.  
But when, despite its sylvan grace,  
They found each day a scanty take  
Belied the promise of the place,  
They deemed its boast an empty dream  
And they the courtiers' jesting theme !  
Forgetting Kings had left it too  
As they proposed now soon to do.  
And so in anger they forsook,  
And hasting left the lakeside nook  
Where patience' longer-baited hook  
'Neath duller skies and frequent shade  
Their labours tenfold had repaid.

And now the place, long derelict,  
Too far to tempt the pirate Pict  
—Who seldom roamed much from the sea  
Where he could soon again be free—  
And scarce known to a later time  
Whose children rarely came to see  
An oak revered of honoured line  
That sprightly wore his centuries nine—  
The place, whose beauty sweet and rude  
Still cheered the wild bird's solitude,  
Near where a ruined boat-house lay,  
Was hasting to its last decay.  
But five moons and a winter day  
After the summer of my lay  
The voice of man was heard again  
Within the forest lake's domain.  
Strangers there came to that green spot  
Each to share the other's lot.  
—An old man and a young who seemed  
Good comrades in the cause they dreamed.  
The youth at times—when he would pause  
As if he pondered on the laws  
That God the Father long had sealed  
But to him now in part revealed—  
To all his comrade said or feared  
Deaf or indifferent oft appeared.

Yet this the other took not ill  
But as they went, more watchful still,  
Down the valley and up the hill,  
Like the good hound that loves his lord  
Is better to him than a sword,  
He wandered silent by his friend  
Only too happy to defend

Or when invited humbly share  
His solitary mid-day fare.

Yet was not Kimbath as the brute  
Foredoomed to be for ever mute ;  
His was the native gift of speech  
And eloquence whose power to teach,  
Now subject to a Higher Will,  
Urged him by mountain, vale and ford  
Preach to the unconverted horde.  
And, since that evening on the moor,  
The voice of Piran at death's door,  
Prayed him the Word of God receive,  
The fervour of a convert's zeal  
For truths he now loved to believe  
Bracing his courage made him feel  
As nothing exile's storm and stress,  
And coming danger always less  
Than other perils he had braved.

Thus in the forest wilderness  
Wandering with him his hand had saved,  
Ambition lacking, wants but few,  
His love for Piran daily grew,  
And ever learning something new  
Of truths the sacred books recall,  
His only thought was how to cheer  
His master's labours and be near  
Him as each want or need did call,  
Anticipating every look  
As if his face an open book  
Which he would read unto the end,  
And, tho' a lesser instrument,  
If God's also, he felt content  
To be the servant of his friend.

The lake and its surroundings too  
As near the river-bed they drew  
Seemed to them both the very spot  
Where persecution ventured not,  
—So little known, so soon to be  
Forgotten as the withered tree !  
But in its very scenery  
The better suited to their plan  
To capture long-benighted man.  
For issuing from it now and then  
To preach unto their fellow men,  
And disappearing none knew where  
Gave to their enterprise an air  
Of mystery that sometimes leads  
Humanity to other creeds.

Fishers of man, but anglers true,  
Now on Fuaran's bank those two  
Surveyed her fords and waters blue  
Whose bosom broad, but never dry,  
A welcome breakfast would supply  
In the close season when good game  
Is better left to roam the plain.  
And of the long-deserted court  
That once had been a King's resort  
A dwelling-place of sorts they made  
Whose roofing was the beeches' shade  
While summer shone upon the glade.  
But when the winter tempest blew  
With bleaker violence up the fen  
For closer shelter they withdrew  
Into a cave above the glen  
Where oak leaves brown and heather dry  
Plucked 'neath a fine October sky

Their daily cares with sleep might drown  
Sweeter than his who wears a crown  
Or slumbers on a bed of down.  
Slow were the martial Kings to turn  
Their backs upon the evil ways  
Long habit and their bardic lays  
Had gilded with the poet's praise ;  
And, while the leaders scorned to learn,  
The Kernes, who followed them to war,  
Jealous of Kimbath's rising star  
And faithful to the literal fact  
Of their persuasion's common pact,  
Held that one convert to a cause—  
The low-born swineherd who now was  
The enemy of cherished laws,  
Old as the beast he once did tend—  
But little could his creed commend.

But when they found his heart yet true  
To nature, and his manner too  
Discreet as in his humble day ;  
And he and Piran never drew  
Coin, meat or raiment for their pay,  
But wandering oft from door to door  
Gave of their bounty to the poor  
The requisites or hard-won pence  
Which were the only recompense  
As hunters they sometimes received  
From foresters for toils relieved,  
The wild Kernes changed their minds and said  
Strangers by generous impulse led  
To help the halt and feed the blind  
Were honest lovers of their kind,

And tho' no good would ever come  
Of heresy but martyrdom  
The men who eased their brothers' need  
Could not be altogether vile.  
So persecution slept the while,  
Or curbed its hate, as one good deed  
Following another sowed the seed  
Of friendship in a race who brood  
With silence' unforgiving mood  
O'er wrongs of ages when no light  
Of succour shines to help the right,  
But in their misery never yet  
The hand of kindness did forget,  
—Tho' forced concessions they will spurn  
And have the native wit to see  
The benefit that seeks return  
Is not the gift of charity.

Sad was their lot, but they had known  
A better when their Kings alone,  
Levyng their tribute from the throne,  
In wartime pressed, and bards with speeches  
Were not so many licensed leeches  
In peace or war, it mattered not,  
The hangers on of court and cot.  
But now the bard by law immune  
From tax and tribute Kings had made  
Himself a burden called the tune  
Of plenty from the host who paid.

It was the custom of the land  
That he who wandered harp in hand  
And sang the melodies he played  
To verses he himself had made

—Where e'er his footsteps lingered late  
At night beside the stranger's gate—  
Within should enter travel-worn  
And rest and shelter find till morn;  
And, for his entertainment, he  
The night would wile with minstrelsy,  
And sing the ancestry or praise  
Of host or dame with many lays.  
So through the ages clear remained  
The fame of men and deeds unstained  
That else had surely vanished with  
The phantom of the legend's myth.

And when the bards were only few  
They were as welcome as the dew  
That falls upon a thirsty soil.  
But now a countless multitude  
Of vagrant minstrels, sometimes rude  
To those who fed them, and the foil  
Of greater ones whose gifts command  
Fresh laurels from the sovereign's hand,  
Preying upon the people roam,  
And wandering on from home to home  
Like soldiers without food or tent  
Levied free quarter where they went.  
And groaning 'neath a greater curse  
Than other evils once deemed worse  
The people sought a master mind  
To free them of their greedy kind  
Who fattened on the public purse.

It was the parting of the ways  
That frequent heralds brighter days



When old truths wear a different guise,  
But new ones bursting into life  
Are scarcely yet received as wise.  
And Piran, never slow to mark  
The true course where the way was dark,  
Sage as the Knight in armoured steel  
Who ponders o'er the battle's plan,  
Mingling discretion with his zeal,  
And deeming Kimbath was the man  
Elect of God to lead the van  
Of progress and the light reveal,  
With wit as keen as battle's blade  
Launched on the bards his first crusade.

Then Kimbath, never slow to tread  
The path where Piran's counsel led,  
Believing now the hour had come  
To storm the hold of heathendom,  
Soon mingled with his note of strife  
Some precepts of a Higher life;  
And so it was the tribes that pressed  
The banishment of bards confessed,  
As waxing strong the movement grew,  
Of the bold clansmen not a few,  
Marvelling at his rude force, began  
To wonder if the peasant man  
Who led them 'gainst the common pest  
Was not the one to guide them best  
In all the things that appertain  
To faith and worship of the Power  
Whose Will mysterious, hour by hour,  
Age after age, the Druid sage  
And bard had yearned to solve in vain.

They listened and forgot their rage  
To hear his eloquence explain  
From the beginning how the Word  
Had shaped the nether from above,  
And then—more wonderful—they heard.  
The Word was God, and God was love.  
Thus Kimbath, sprung from lowly sires,  
Whose eloquence' long sleeping fires  
Piranus kindled to the flame,  
Broke once for all the hardic name  
And links of harmony the devil  
Had forged into a chain of evil.

He came the rough way to make smooth—  
And preach the word from booth to booth  
In the few marts where commerce grew—  
As on the wilds his boyhood knew.  
Only a swineherd raised by God,  
Rugged of aspect and reserved  
Save in the cause of truth he served ;  
Yet strong in silence, for his word  
Was greater than a prince's nod,  
And wit and fervour's two-edged sword  
Seemed better than the King's command.  
When daily now the stricken land,  
As if beneath a sorcerer's wand,  
Rose in rebellion to be feared  
Against the caste so long revered.

While Kimbath's fierce unvarying zeal  
Scourged Erin's bards with edged steel ;  
And of her princes not a few  
Came now to seek his counsel true,  
Piranus for a season went  
To seek the shelter of his tent

Upon the confines of the moor  
Near by Fuaran's reed-grown shore.  
For well he loved in sunny June  
With his own spirit to commune,  
And if ill tidings vexed him sore,  
Or human frailty bade him fret,  
The Lake was his Genesaret  
—One prayer he breathed, and chafed no more—

He stood beside the running stream  
And watched the sunrise' opal gleam  
With little cause for sorrow now,  
When triumph shone upon his brow,  
Veined in a rock of whitest snow  
As uncut marble will appear  
Reflected in a river clear.  
He stood beside the running stream  
And pondered sweet on good work done—  
The Kings and rulers who had come  
First of the land with clans as old,  
Under one Shepherd to one fold.  
And as he thought thereon he smiled  
For joy, as when a little child  
He'd gained what to his soul was dear,  
And laughed with glee—but, as he smiled,  
Into the stream there fell a tear !

Again he mused—was it in vain  
To hope before another year was old——  
But hark, the brushwood parts amain,  
Strangers unseen have crossed the plain.  
In the dim mists of morning cold  
Before him stood two warriors bold.  
They turned aside, but not before  
He saw the Osrig crest they wore,

And for barbaric ornament  
The convert's cross a friend had lent,  
Told one at least had not been sent  
To slay the Christian in his tent.

Then Piran, hasting to his side,  
Embraced them both with loving pride  
And wept for gladness as he cried—  
“Tell me, my fellow-tribesmen, tell—  
Is the old man my father well?  
And she who bare me? Do they know—  
Sunshine or sorrow, warmth or snow—  
'Mid all the trials of my lot  
And later triumphs I have not  
Forgotten one rude hut or cot  
Of all the Osrig's broad domain?  
When shall I view the salt sea-foam  
Or reach my father's hill again?  
An outcast from my native home  
Forgotten of my kin I roam,  
And some have sought to do me ill,  
And others plotted how to kill  
The exile who has loved them still!”

“Then tarry not,” they both replied,  
“Nor linger by the cool lakeside;  
But to thy father's dwelling come  
With us who shed these bitter tears  
That now their course remorseful run  
For all the evil we have done.  
But two nights since thy mother's fears  
And doubts all vanished like the smoke  
That curls above the forest oak,  
And, rising ever straight and true,  
Mingles its own with Heaven's blue.

And when she prayed thy father too  
Renounced the old faith for the new.

“And, as we wished our chieftain’s weal,  
And older converts with us kneel,  
With his conversion many feel  
Baptism and the Cross must seal  
The souls of them who faithful pray  
To serve their Maker from that day.  
The tidings spread below the hill,  
Where loud rejoicings broke the still,  
But we the swiftest of the clan  
Right to the forest eager ran,  
And never slackened speed until  
The second sunrise we were near  
To bring the good news to thine ear.”

It were no labour to relate  
Piran’s home-coming and the fête  
Prepared for him upon the hill  
Where tribal custom flourished still;  
The bonfires piled with hearty will  
Of peat-moss and the brushwood sere,  
Blazing their welcome bright and clear.  
How many Kernes obeyed the call  
To hasten to the Osrig’s hall;  
How many willing toilers freed  
To taste the guest-cakes and the mead,  
Now joined their masters in applause  
And blessed good entertainment’s laws.

All this and more I could unfold  
Were not the night already old;  
But, ere I give my trusty pen  
The quiet of the author’s den,

Another scene, another deed,  
Dear reader, claims our pious heed,  
And other names forgotten long  
But no less proper to my song.  
Beyond the pinewood and the moor  
Recall us to Fuaran's shore :

For there they lived and toiled and died—  
The children of the Crucified  
Who no less faithful to the sword  
Had served a warring earthly lord.  
Attentive to the daily task,  
Too loyal to their chief to ask  
More payment than the times afford,  
How ill is now the future stored  
With honest fellows such as you  
And others of your kindred, who  
Faithful to duty did not grieve  
The pastures of your sires to leave,  
And serve the master without fee  
Whose God and people yours should be.  
It is the dawn—but ere they turn  
Toward the distant lake their way,  
In the yet smouldering fires they burn  
Old clay gods grim, and silent fling  
The former idols of their king.  
This done in peace they leave their land  
Of plenty smiling on the strand  
Upon whose waves of clearer blue  
More jewels yet Aurora threw.

Drinking the pure sweet morning air  
They left for aye a scene so fair.

And each man in his brawny hand  
Some relics for the chief did bear  
Which he at times might use or wear ;  
But in their arms the women kept  
A dearer treasure for him yet—  
The surest pledges of each sept,  
The babes whose wit should grow to be  
As merry as their monarch's glee.

The path was rough, the way was slow,  
But ever cheerful on they go  
And sing the long midsummer day  
The songs of Erin as they may  
Led by a harper white of beard  
And for his music long revered,  
Who only of the bards appeared,  
From long conviction, like his chief,  
A convert to the new belief.  
Blind from his cradle he had been,  
And at the feast was never seen  
Without the shamrock's triple leaf  
Hung on his harp that wept for grief  
Or laughed with joy as he would bring  
Fresh gladness from each tender string.

Oft uninvited at the wake,  
A secret place he loved to take,  
And in a silent interval,  
Unseeing and unseen of all,  
While grief forebore the funeral wail,  
The mourner's ear he would enthrall  
With melody, or fierce assail  
With hatred's clever-woven tale  
Sea-rovers of the wandering Gael.

Then bid his music from the foam  
Backward to Erin fondly roam,  
New wars foretelling soon to come  
'Gainst better foemen nearer home.

Now past a mound where heroes sleep,  
He trolled a war-march rich and deep,  
And, as his kinsmen walking kept  
Time with the chords his fingers swept,  
Old men who heard the strain once more  
Said it was sweeter than before.  
But when they gained Fuaran's shore  
The note of war his hand forebore  
And struck forthwith a mightier chord—  
The triumph of the risen Lord !

And then just as his spirit yearned  
A hymn of peace, untaught, unlearned,  
Whose image never yet discerned  
Within his secret soul had lain,  
Lowly, majestic, stave for stave  
To echoes of the lake, he gave.  
It floated on the sleeping wave—  
In quiet harmony made plain  
The fresh creation of his brain.  
Its measure, weird, but never rude,  
The eager listening multitude  
Catch up in chorus and again  
Repeat in tune and time a strain  
Whose word and air that very hour they find  
Composed for them by Carolan the blind.

They stood beside the river-bank,  
The children of a long descent,  
The lowly born and chiefs of rank



With middlemen who only hire  
The land to let at greater rent,  
But all sprung from the common sire  
Who to the clan his name had given ;  
And they have only one desire—  
A thousand souls to consecrate,  
And from Piranus learn the gate  
That opens free for them to Heaven.  
And he, yet musing how to leaven  
The bread of life for them prepared,  
With reverent mien and ringlets bared  
First bids them on their Maker call  
To banish sin original.  
Then kneeling with them fervent prayed,  
And as they rise, their burden laid,  
The true sign of the Cross they made,  
And feel the weight of error fall  
In answer to the prayer of all.  
Some weep for joy while others cry  
And beg a blessing from the sky ;  
But others, doubtful yet of peace,  
Prayers for forgiveness never cease  
To offer for the gravest sin  
They reckon they have wandered in.  
And such to ease the bitterness  
And travail of a guilty soul  
Crimes of a lifetime loud confess,  
And weeping ask to pay the toll  
Before they cross the bridge that brings  
Conversion's solace even to Kings.

But, of the group that cried so sore,  
Wingela, kneeling on the shore,

The slow declining day prolongs  
 With her confession of the wrongs  
 Piranus and the Osrig bands  
 Have suffered at her guilty hands :  
 And then men heard with wonder how  
 A false wife for long years had kept  
 Her agéd consort faithless to the vow  
 And promise in the light of day till now  
 He dared not openly avow.

But most in penance of regret  
 Her milk-white teeth she firmly set  
 And prayed for ever to forget  
 The murder she herself had planned  
 Against her son from Osrig-land,  
 An exile by Fuaran's strand.  
 But Piran took her fevered hand,  
 And smiling said, " No éric<sup>1</sup> due,  
 Law, or old custom can demand,  
 And if the love that moveth you  
 For evil done would make amends,  
 But little now remains to do,  
 And, here, behold, are all my friends !"<sup>2</sup>

With that unto the river bed  
 The Osrig Queen he firmly led,  
 And with baptism's rite to save  
 Dipped her beneath the flowing wave.  
 Baptised their Queen the Osrig clan—  
 Babes, women, chief, and every man  
 Repeating slow the sacred verse,  
 He tranquil hastens to immerse.

<sup>1</sup> An Irish fine formerly paid by the murderer to the murdered's friends.

<sup>2</sup> The Osrigs.

So long the task he scarce had done  
Before the setting of the sun  
A gold red cross had fashioned low  
On the horizon's cloud-kissed brow ;  
And in the parting glow of day  
Upon a small cloud sailing by  
It stood against the bright blue sky  
So clear unto the naked eye  
It seemed above the westering sun  
A portent true to judgment come,  
Or heavenly body from its home  
Wandering alone with waning strength  
Until its limbs of equal length<sup>1</sup>  
And fiery beam—red on the white—  
Had vanished far from mortal sight.

It left a blood-red line between  
The sun-ray and its circling sheen  
That spreading wide and mounting higher,  
Now like a track of living fire,  
Now as three stars of radiant beam  
In jewelled beauty fair was seen,  
Then fading swift its glory shed  
Upon the lake's reflected red  
Seeming to tinge the river bed  
And at the last to disappear  
Within Fuaran's sacred mere.

The blood-red portent seen so well  
Many a year the Osrigs tell.  
And near the lake where Piran's cell  
Had secret lain within the dell,

<sup>1</sup> The Greek Cross—the well-known Cross of St. George—here symbolical of the conversion of Ireland and her future conquest by England.

As some atonement for their former guilt,  
A township fair they and Wingela built.  
Its site and name forgotten now  
Will mock the pilgrim's pious search,  
But on the sacred hillside brow  
Some oratory, fane, or church  
Doubtless the people of the time  
To palliate forgiven crime  
And with the love that casts out fear  
Unto Piranus' name did rear.

No altar-tomb or font's cold rim,  
No cloister grey in twilight dim  
Remains to-day—we cannot trace  
The father's fane or dwelling-place.  
We only know he stayed to see  
The town grow to maturity,  
Watching and praying long years seven  
To guide the neighbouring clans to Heaven;  
And deeming then his work was done,  
He left the land—the only one  
He in his heart had ever loved.  
Not in the present or the past  
His free-born spirit eager roved,  
For though he gave some thought to both  
His soul abhorred the wanton sloth  
And pleasant snare of leisure days.  
Not that he scorned the people's praise  
Of a successful pilgrimage,  
But on the future he had cast  
The ripe strength of his middle age.  
As the good ship before the blast  
Ploughs unknown seas with bended mast,

Where other fields remained to sow,  
Like Paul or Peter he would go  
Never forgetful of his vow—

“ If God be with me and allow  
Deliverance to his servant now,  
And grant when I have found release  
I reach my father’s house in peace.  
Then for the years that I shall live  
My life unto my God I give,  
To fearless teach his just commands  
And preach the Word in other lands.”  
As reason for his going was given,  
A mystic call received from Heaven,  
His way to other climes to wend  
And there await his coming end.

And with him sailed, all bathed in tears,  
Wingela in the winter of her years,  
And all that God-like missionary band,  
Charged with Christ’s message to Cornubia land.  
Germochus, Breaca, and devout Sininus,  
Ia who after preached on Isle Pendinus,  
And others bright with fervour from above,  
Soon over seas to light the lamp of love.  
The air was calm and scarce a breeze did move  
Or ruff the tranquil surface of the bay,  
Where still becalmed their shallop waiting rode ;  
There, till the evening, patient they abode  
And prayerful watch the slow declining day  
Whilst in full chorus rose their pilgrim lay :—

Breezes waft our pilgrim barque,  
Zephyrs curl the doubtful wave,  
Onward bear us, billows dark,  
To the souls we voyage to save.

Father, brother we forsake,  
Weeping quit a fruitful sod,  
Ocean's liquid surface break,  
Leave our country for our God.

Farewell, Erin, land of green,  
Ancient cradle of our race,  
Farewell sunset's parting sheen  
Smiling on her lovely face.

Farewell, native land, farewell,  
Crystal lakes, again adieu,  
Farewell valley, stream, and fell,  
Farewell mountain-ridges blue.

Breezes waft our pilgrim barque,  
Zephyrs curl the doubtful wave,  
Onward bear us, billows dark,  
To the souls we voyage to save.

## BOOK V.

### THE WRESTLING MATCH.

Landing of the Irish Pilgrims at Pendinus (the modern St. Ives), where they are received by the chiefs Tudor and Dinan, and for two days hospitably entertained by the people. Piranus then allots the different parts of Cornwall to his fellow missionaries, after which he himself, with Wingela his mother, sets out for the city called Langarrow, where, after narrowly escaping death by the Druids on the way, they arrive to find the inhabitants holding sports in the Roman amphitheatre (now Perran Round), on conclusion of which Piranus addresses the people. To this their King Carādoc replies, and after welcoming Piranus and Wingela, bewails the cruelty and greed of the Romans. The curse of Carādoc.

THE self-same eve Atlanta's bosom kind,  
Full gracious heaving to the northern wind,  
Bright the third morrow's early sunbeams play  
On their moored shallops that in safety lay  
Where Riviere's source did join Pendinus' bay.  
There to the slender roadstead hasting came  
Tudor,<sup>1</sup> who kingship o'er the race did claim,  
And with him Dinan, lord of many lands,  
Held by allegiance sovereign Rome demands.  
And each, his hill-men leading to the shore,  
Eternal friendship to the pilgrims swore.  
Taught by Corantius<sup>3</sup> they had learned to bless  
All harbingers of Heaven's righteousness.

<sup>1</sup> Hence Pendene.

<sup>2</sup> Ancestor of the Welsh Tudors.

<sup>3</sup> He had converted many of the Cornish to Christianity before the coming of Piran.

And, though the folk, to Druidry long bred,  
Yearned for the cromlech on the mountain-head,  
The more part, with the fervour of their race,  
A stranger's teaching eager to embrace,  
Or conscience deaf, where worldly weal had pressed,  
Espoused the creed their warring lords confessed.  
Lodging and food, in ill-disguised delight,  
They urge upon the messengers of light,  
Nor sought to question of their distant home,  
Nor of their going or wherefore they had come,  
But old-world guest-rites hospitably show  
In fashion this fat age had scorned to know.  
Yet talked they of the perils of the deep,  
When waves encroaching on a lee shore creep,  
And Ocean's hand, turned from the main a while,  
Menaced the beauties of Pendinus' isle.<sup>1</sup>  
" Much hazard ours," the rude folk said,  
" And oft the fisher's net full spread  
Seen only to his practised eye.  
For we the deeps from birth have wed,  
And sailed 'neath many a mackerel sky.  
And long the Druid law forbade<sup>2</sup>  
The draughts of fishes we had made,  
And death their white-robed sires decree  
To harvesters of God's blue sea.  
But we, who loved our native bay  
And nursed our manhood on the waves,  
Should we the priest bard's rule obey  
Or swell the ranks of custom's slaves?  
Nay, rather when experience showed  
The folly of the beaten road,  
And law our natural right forsook,  
Into our hand the law we took !

<sup>1</sup> An island at the mouth of the Riviere.

<sup>2</sup> By the Druid law the Britons were forbidden to eat fish.



Such is the spirit of this land  
And ours that rove the western sea ;  
So here, my pilgrim friend's a hand—  
All hail, ye holy company."

Another morn hath left her rosy bed,  
Another sun his midday course hath sped,  
And still Piranus, roused from freshening sleep,  
Till evening dewes the western hillsides steep  
And songbirds welcome twilight with glad tune,  
With Heaven's elect seemed almost to commune,  
Nor breathed a whisper to his waiting band  
Till he did judge High God had given command,  
When to his followers by Atlanta's mere  
He spake at length in accents liquid clear,

Allotting each a region for their toil  
Within the limits of the stranger soil,  
What prayers, what fasts, what vigils long would aid  
When duty's call the balm of sleep forbade.  
But chiefest he did urge to patient wait,  
If no escape might cheat the martyr's fate.  
"For martyr's blood," quoth he, "when God had  
need

From the beginning was the Church's seed ;  
Into His hand my chosen few I give.  
And you may die—your word shall surely live"—  
No breath dissentient broke the holy calm  
That lasted with the Father's uplift palm.  
All with one voice and meek assenting nod  
Receive his call as come direct from God.  
There was in them a harmony divine  
That shamed the shield of many a royal line,  
And Discord all her wiles had stirred in vain  
To wake division in their pilgrim train.

Such is the strength that common faith doth show  
When danger threatens from a foreign foe.  
Yet aftertime rivers of blood decreed  
From Christians warring for a purer creed !  
Battles they waged, but not against the fiend ;  
Rich is the harvest schism's hand hath gleaned.  
And we have seen a hundred doctrines new,  
As many faiths disturb the ancient true,<sup>1</sup>  
Give to the infidel an open door,  
And bid, alas ! the atheist scoff the more.  
But these lone few, a faithful band,  
Their own lives carrying in their hand,  
'Mid many a tribe still in the Druid's thrall,  
In life and death united stand or fall.

Now with the morn they sorrowing all embrace  
The genial hosts and kindly western race  
Who smiled upon their coming from the deep  
And at their early parting haste to weep.  
Not theirs dull sloth with feast and bout to feed,  
But follow where Piranus bids them lead.  
Over Cornubia's rugged hills they rove  
In eager quest of holy treasure-trove,  
Nor know what fate they soon perchance may find  
At hands of the benighted heathen blind.  
Yet in their breast hope stronger beat than fear  
The glory of the martyr's crown to wear.  
But on Piranus' neck they all wept sore  
For dread that they might see his face no more,  
And fondly still when far removed from view  
Haunts every eye the parting glance he threw  
From bountiful Pendinus' yellow shore.

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, the Church of England. There was a Christian Church in Cornwall and the West before Rome dominated England.

The Father and Wingela that same day  
Toward Langarrow wend their northern way,  
Counselled from High their earthly lot to share  
With those who tilled a spot so wondrous fair.  
But first the wooded mount<sup>1</sup> they fain would see,  
A tidal islet soon foredoomed to be ;  
And later viewed Carn-Brea's rock-channelled<sup>2</sup> brow,  
Whence Druid lore its darksome cloud did throw.

There to their traveller query one replied,  
" And would you seek the city in her pride ?  
Wend you your way till shades of evening pale  
With twilight's robe the mountain-side shall veil,  
But, ere the night with friendly shade doth hide,  
Far from the ken of Druid's town<sup>3</sup> abide.  
For there are Blood-rites on the hill to-night  
Whilst yet the new moon<sup>4</sup> sheds her virgin light ;  
And glad the Druids that remain would see  
An end of goodly pilgrims like to ye.  
But when the morn her robe of light hath donned,  
And skims the seamew ocean's drifting frond  
From out the cavern that your slumbers knew,  
With morning zest your northern course renew  
Till Carn St. Agnes<sup>5</sup> meet your careful view.  
Stone barrows three upon her crest do stand,  
Nor blooms but gorse flower on her sterile land.  
You'll know the crag by quartz upon her brow,  
That forms a beacon to the world below ;

<sup>1</sup> St. Michael's Mount—at one time surrounded with woods, before the incoming of the sea. Mount's Bay was then a forest.

<sup>2</sup> *I.e.*, with rock basins.

<sup>3</sup> *I.e.*, Redruth.

<sup>4</sup> The Druids held their important assemblies with the new or full moon.

<sup>5</sup> The modern St. Agnes Beacon.

But, if your glance misdoubting still shall spy,  
 Fear not to ask of him who passeth by,  
 And question if you twain do see aright  
 The grim ascent where once a giant wight  
 Hath stood, one foot upon that barren wold,  
 And other planted firm on Michael's hold!<sup>1</sup>  
 And ever by the blue sea would you wend  
 Whence ye have come there<sup>2</sup> shall ye find a friend,  
 A chief beloved throughout Dunmonium<sup>3</sup> land,  
 Mild is his rule and stalwart is his band.  
 But hush! a Druid's tread doth meet mine ear,  
 Ill boots it me to further parley here.  
 A Christian unconfessed I live in dread  
 And counsel give at peril of my head."

He ceased, and swift had vanished from their view,  
 But they did hide where forest saplings grew  
 And parchéd heather sighed for evening dew,  
 Nor durst their northern pilgrimage resume  
 Till Hesper's beams the dying day illume,  
 And Druids waiting fast approaching night  
 Had sought the grove beyond the grim-faced height.

The ensuing eve Langarrow<sup>4</sup> looms in sight,  
 Her fruitful valleys decked with cornfields bright,  
 And pastures rich, that recompense the toil  
 Bestowed upon her genial native soil.  
 Cærdinas<sup>5</sup> steep defend her winding vales  
 'Gainst every foe that venturesome assails.

<sup>1</sup> St. Michael's Mount.

<sup>2</sup> *I.e.*, by the sea.

<sup>3</sup> Dunmonium certainly, and Cornubia probably, included both the modern Devon and Cornwall.

<sup>4</sup> Although called a "city," it must not be forgotten the term was applied by the ancients to any collection of dwellings deemed worthy of a name at all.

<sup>5</sup> *I.e.*, hill-castles.

Skilled in the art of war her sons know well  
To bend the bow on mountainside or fell,  
Yet dearer reckon homestead, hearth, and field,  
Than all the honours purple war may yield,  
And celts<sup>1</sup> of flintstone ply from dawn till eve  
When pastoral joys their warlike toils relieve.

Now, down fair valleys, locked with hillsides steep,  
That slope majestic to the restless deep,  
Piranus gazed upon a Briton scene  
Of oak woods waving over meadows green,  
And pastures fat whose breast did heave to meet  
The friendly lap of ocean's daily beat ;  
Where seaborne breezes, landward wafted high,  
His forehead fan with gently rustling sigh ;  
Kneeling in awe he craveth Heaven's smile  
For that sweet corner of proud Albion's isle.

And now those pilgrims climbed the last ascent,  
And neared the goal whereto their footsteps bent.  
Fearful at times, yet ever hoping on,  
Though the last day for them perchance had shone.  
Upon the summit of the hillside brow  
That looked toward Atlanta's strand below  
Behold an amphitheatre, or round,  
With tiers of turf seats,<sup>2</sup> rising mound on mound,  
Filled to o'erflowing with a festive crowd  
Whose mirthful plaudits echo far and loud  
—Where the glad folk in holiday attire  
Observe the birthday of some honoured sire  
With western games and proud display of sport  
Whereto with joyance neighbour clans resort.

<sup>1</sup> An ancient implement of agriculture.

<sup>2</sup> These seats were still there in the eighteenth century.

Within the arena, strewed with yellow sand,  
The stalwart champions proud, defiant stand.  
Stout calves and brawny arms of wondrous length  
Betokened well each combatant's ripe strength,  
To chill the heart of all who dare compete  
In wrestling, hurling, or aught other feat.  
Twice twenty rounds beneath the late spring sun  
Have not sufficed to tell the better one,  
And eager long a company did wait  
To greet the hero of their wrestling fête.  
With waning strength the doughty champions bend,  
Again their muscles sore taxed wide distend;  
Vice-like they grapple with Titanic hands  
That test their frames with strength of iron bands;  
Thick bead drops hot their rugged brows suffuse  
And drenching soak their golden locks profuse.  
So even matched they strain, none yet can tell  
Which youth his stubborn combatant will fell,  
Till chance outweighed the skill wherewith they vied  
And turns the issue strength may not decide.  
The fleecy clouds, that, hiding heaven, roam  
And spread their curtain far beneath her dome,  
Sore weighted in the high ærial space,  
Hopeless against the light-winged zephyrs race,  
And o'er the lands, fringed by the azure main,  
Their course pursue with ever-labouring train,  
Till, on the lap of fair Langarrow's plain,  
In transient shower descends the cooling rain.  
Its sparse-shed drops scarce wet the verdant sod  
And sanded space, whereon the champions trod,  
And soon the short-lived raindrops fade apace,  
Glistening to greet the sun's returning face.  
With fiery heat his glowing visage burns,  
And to that nook, with piercing brilliance, turns

Where sand was sprinkled scant upon the lay,  
Unheeded in the excitement of the fray ;  
And, on that spot, where treachery's hand had hid,  
In his despite one youth suspectless slid,  
Full on the sward, with overbalanced strength,  
Unwilling spreads his prostrate stature's length,  
And, locked within his foeman's grim embrace,  
To the far ether turns his shame-tinged face.

Then angry tears burst from his light-blue eyes ;  
With fruitless challenge thrice he vaunting cries  
As, with one breath, the neighbour voices blend  
To laud the vanquisher whom all commend,  
And with green branch from shaded coppice torn  
His brow with oaken coronet adorn.  
The last throw done, the festive pastime o'er,  
Each seeks the shelter of the cottage door.  
But when to view, hard by an ancient rill,  
Strangers in alien garb surmount the hill,  
They linger lazily upon the leas  
To mark their visitors from foreign seas.  
Nor missed their glance Piranus' lordly height,  
His aspect mild and comely features bright,  
And others pity old Wingela lame,  
Her snow-white locks and frail decrepit frame.  
None mock the simple Irish cross they wear,  
Emblem and ensign of the God they fear.  
Taught by Corantius some had learned to bless  
The harbingers of Heaven's righteousness,  
Pagan and Christian one and all their clan  
Reverence the bearing of the holy man.

Scarce had they paused, ere homeward slow to wend,  
Than Piran's instinct, never dull, had kenned



The nature of the games and pastoral fête  
The rustic throng had flocked to celebrate.  
Right glad he grasps the moment opportune  
With his adopted brethren to commune ;  
His discourse seasons well with ready wit  
And reference apt that may the occasion fit,  
As with his virgin effort in the tongue  
Of them whose clan he'd come to dwell among,  
The path of peace that heavenward bright-gemmed  
leads

With dulcet tongue he eloquently pleads.  
" Oh new-found flock, all without shepherd here,  
Sons of Langarrow you to me appear.  
Within your midst, upon this neighbour isle,  
I will, please Heaven, abide with you awhile  
To cheer the converts Cury<sup>1</sup> turned to light,  
And warn them who the Master's summons slight.  
From Erin's isle a Christian, Piran hight,  
Eastward with her who bare me I have come  
To seek new friends and find another home ;  
For we are vowed to Jesus evermore,  
And ne'er again may seek our native shore.

" Ye Briton race, sons of the ancient stock,  
Who, from Dunmonium's crag-crowned summits,  
mock

The warlike peoples savage, cunning, brave,  
That would your native liberties enslave,  
Rise to attack a more insidious foe,  
That saps your strength and lays your forces low.  
All earthly fights I trow but won in vain  
If future bliss you may not hope to gain.  
Receive the antidote to Satan's spell  
That saves believers from the jaws of hell.

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, Curantius.



With produce from your tin streams you have  
bought

The fairest gems Phœnician art hath wrought.

The pearl I proffer you is without price—

Salvation given by Jesus' sacrifice.

In every race how keen each rival vies ;

All strive to gain, but one receives the prize.

But he who wrestling grapples close with sin,

That race who runneth all may ever win."

He spake, and none his mother wit denied,

Nor scorned the words of wisdom from his lips ;

And many a Christian hand his broad palm slips

Within the stranger's, lingering by his side,

When to him swift the western clansmen's pride

Carādocus the Briton King replied :—

" Thrice welcome pilgrims to Cornubia land

Whither you've come, obeying God's command.

Nor think to rest a season with our clan,

Or the brief remnant of my life's full span.

For I am old, and on this hoary head

But few more suns their summer heats may shed.

Aloft long since my childhood's friends have gone

And childless now my days I live alone,

And soon must seek, of all I love bereft,

A land more distant than the one you've left.

Talk not of tarrying, with our clan remain,

Nor further eastward seek a home again.

Untamed in war our wood-lords, held divine,

Their backs have never turned to foeman's line.

Against our fathers Rome in vain had striven

Had heaven to all the tribes of Albion given

The ancient valour of Dunmonium's race.

'Tis an eld tale, but from thine august face  
Holiness looks, so in thine ear I'll pour  
The wrongs of ages, all our fathers bore,  
And if I die 'tis only one life more !

Vanquished our northern kinsfolk, dead our hope  
Of liberty, and yet we dared to cope  
With empire from our steep Cærdinas hoar,  
And arrow clouds unerring, ceaseless pour,  
Till, like a mighty flood, another host<sup>1</sup>  
From their war-galleys pour upon our coast.  
Combined their forces swift their onslaught made  
In the grey wane of twilight's glimmering shade.  
Five times outnumbered still our gallant band  
With patriot blood enrich their native land.  
The fight becomes a massacre, the sun  
Sets on a desperate battle hardly won,  
His blood-red tints of melancholy hue  
Pitying the heroes whom their murderers slew.

Oh ! God of Heaven, what scenes, what fearful sights  
Disgraced the Roman name on our rude heights.  
In frenzied butchery raged their passions loose.  
No mercy mild, no quarter, peace or truce,  
And when each star reluctant shed his ray  
Upon the issue of that fatal day  
In the dim shadow of their cheerless beam  
'Mid orphans' cries, and widowed mothers' scream  
Corses on corses fiercely hurled below  
With vermeil's shade defile the river's flow.  
And where the shallow depth and narrow brim  
No freedom gives the bleeding mass to swim,

<sup>1</sup> After the subjection of the tribes of Britain generally, Cornwall was invaded probably by two divisions of the army of 50,000 which effected the subjugation of the West.

Close-locked in death their bodies form a dam  
To freight the stream erst undisturbed and calm,  
Till o'er the ghastly figures that appal  
Behold now flows an angry waterfall,  
Whose purpled current rushing seaward speeds  
To wash the anguished wound with which it bleeds.  
Shades of my slaughtered fathers ! oh avenge  
The wanton rout that stained our happy land.  
Baffle the greed that lit the foeman's brand.  
Your children, heirs of Ocean's western fringe,  
Forbidden arms, disdainful scorn to cringe.  
Nor, with quelled spirit, murmur or repine  
Under the rulers of a robber line  
Whose malice cold, and grasping savagery,  
With swords, your haughty souls disdained to flee,  
Crimsoned the breakers of our rock-bound strand.

But 'tis a world-wide story known too well,  
Rome's darker deeds of tyranny to tell.  
Unbridled lust and sordid avarice,  
With sufferings that would soften hearts of ice,  
Meet a Proprætor's e'er indifferent eye  
So he may on his wonted day supply  
The annual tribute his lieutenants bring  
To the imperial city, and then wring  
What more the greed, hell-born, of gold may seize  
By force of diabolical decrees,  
With aid of parasites and fawning tools  
And suck the life-blood of the land he rules.

And yet her mighty empire, still secure,  
Reeking with pelf and luxury's deeds impure,  
A rotten fabric insolent doth stand,  
And to the world gives Sovereignty's command.

Yet justice surely hath not found her death  
Four hundred years since holy Christ drew breath,  
Whilst Freedom's voice cries nightly to the skies  
For vengeance on the tyrants we despise.  
To queenly Boadicea's dying curse,  
That awed the foes she might no more disperse,  
Echo Carādoc's, on this western hill,  
And reach the halls that angel spirits fill.

Cursed be the city ; from the hills, that frown  
Upon the abandoned people they disown,  
Let vultures, mountain-bred, sweep down each height,  
And, flocking, cluster where they swiftly light,  
Of slaughtered Romans take their hungry feed.  
Then to the crags on high, like lightning, speed  
To gain the ledges, where each callow brood  
Within its eyrie daily cries for blood,  
And from the seven summits fierce survey,  
With keen eye shaded from the sun's hot ray,  
The desert farm, and desolate corpse-strewn dale,  
And streets that run with gore to tell the tale  
Of foreign victory and a galling yoke,  
And wild tribes' vengeance Heaven hath awoke.

And may no hoard of base-won treasure buy  
The friendship of barbarian enemy ;  
But isolate, thrice vanquished, let her feel  
The thrust of savages' remorseless steel.  
In after years may her divided land  
A battlefield for other nations stand.  
Let mighty states, and peoples yet unborn,  
Fight on her soil with civic tumult torn.  
The conflict's burden let her helpless bear,  
But fruits of victory hope in vain to share."

## BOOK VI.

### CARĀDOC AND THE ROMANS.

The character of Carādoc. His position with the Romans and the Britons, in which his great influence with both is used for their mutual good, though he declines all office under the Romans; which, added to his great bravery and unselfishness, makes his power over his fellow-countrymen all the greater. But his dream of a free Britain after the final departure of the Romans is doomed to disappointment through the general corruption of the tribes beyond Devon and Cornwall.

CARĀDOCUS had spoken—on his brow  
Gleamed the bright fervour of the warrior's glow,  
And righteous hatred of the cruel hand,  
That pressed so sore upon his native land.  
With patriot ring his words the silence broke  
And bitter wrongs of ages fearless spoke.  
Treason and liberty in one long breath  
Dauntless he breathed, nor gave a thought to  
death.

For of the clansmen, bright with kindred pride,  
Who eager listening crowded to his side,  
To drink of freedom from her ancient fount,  
Each one disdained the informer's step to mount.  
Far rather one and all had bravely died  
Or torture's pangs intrepid still defied.

He stood, a hero on his western heath,  
And waved the sword that prudence knew to sheath,  
Oft gently curbing, with his smile's sweet bribe,  
The bolder spirits of his down-trod tribe,

And risked the taunt that baser souls might fling  
Rather than bloodshed, once more, futile bring,  
And unrelenting vengeance raise anew  
Upon the race with whom his childhood grew.  
Too nice he judged the strength of Roman might  
To run the hazard of another fight,  
And feigned respect, unmixed with fear or awe,  
Accords the ministers of foreign law,  
Whilst deep within his faithful heart he bore  
The burden of his hapless country's sore,  
Longing to extirpate the she-wolf's breed  
And save the fatherland he would have freed.

He whose life's eve has lit on darksome ways,  
Whose free-born will a lord's behest obeys,  
And, fallen from his former high estate,  
Must brook the insult, silent bear the hate,  
Of "powers that be" he may not alienate,  
And helpless chafing 'gainst his lord's restraints  
Sick unto death his wearied spirit faints,  
Till, yearning for the lands his birthright gave,  
He d——s the fate that makes him fortune's slave,  
Knows well, I deem, the sweets of freedom gone,  
As with the ruin of an ancient throne  
The stars had wept to see their love undone.

But this brave chieftain never once had known  
The freedom pure his fathers called their own.  
In servitude he oped his baby eyes  
To view his land a Roman legate's prize.  
His childhood saw a mother's secret tears  
Reflect a subject people's gloomy fears,  
And manhood's prime beheld an alien race  
Still brand the soil with slavery's disgrace.

Now in life's sunset, last of Britain's line,  
Tho' fierce within his murmuring soul repine,  
To sons of them his fathers captive led  
With forced civility he bows the head  
White with the rime of eighty winters' frosts.  
Such semblance of good fellowship he shows  
And hails the passing Roman who accosts,  
To mollify hereditary foes,  
And confidence of aliens deftly wins  
To palliate the subject's hundred sins.

His voice pacific rulers eager sought  
And by its magic disaffection bought,  
Or threw the sop their statecraft hoped might please,  
When Sullalike<sup>1</sup> they willed to bask at ease  
And still rebellion indolence had moved  
To revel in the luxury they loved.  
Not as their model quit they empire's post  
And office later Romans covet most  
—Rule more than sovereign in a distant land  
Far from the waning Cæsars' faint command—  
But hold till called the seat they make a throne  
And wield the sword they come to think their own.

And yet, how-be-it the King so long had leant  
To harmony with Rome's arbitrament,  
The very tie that envy's 'venomed brood  
—Friend to the rich—will use to blast the good—  
Scarce roused suspicion in a single wood,  
Or grazed the edge of jealousy's green sore  
To mar the love his faithful tribesmen bore.  
For many a time his fearless hand had freed  
The victim of the roving soldier's greed.

<sup>1</sup> Sulla, after attaining supreme power, resigned it to devote himself to pleasure.



Oft as against the children of the soil  
Some ruling Latin's heated passions boil,  
Or with law's cloak, or thinly-veiled pretence,  
Cried loud for bloodshed to appease offence,  
Or with Italian cunning framed pretext  
His limb to take whose thoughtless deed hath  
vexed,

Ever o'er hillside, valley, tor, and mead  
Carādocus had desperate flown to plead  
The pardon Cæsar seldom deigned to cede,  
With ireful rulers rushed to interpose,  
Ere savage wrath the door of mercy close,  
Kneeling a suppliant at the legate's throne,  
And saved a life at peril of his own.

For there was deep in his great heart  
The knowledge of a better part.  
And, shorn of strength, the forest-born  
Would succour still his own forlorn,  
Like some tall giant of the wood  
All tendril-girt through ages stood  
Where hazels fringe a forest's hem,  
And ivies clasp the massive stem  
Woodpeckers' breasts have circled oft.  
—With clarion pipe they climb aloft,  
The creviced bark till night to probe  
For treasure from its mossy robe.

And 'neath his arms in Spring's midday  
Where grasses tall the stream divide  
Reed-warblers fitful tune their lay  
Or in the sedges haste to hide  
At scream-note of the blue-winged jay.  
Whilst leisurely at will to stray



Thro' wood and vale the river bears  
Till now beyond the lichened stairs  
That foaming speed her nether way,  
And perfumes sweet the breezes fanned  
Of gosling blossoms, and, all day,  
On either bank a happy land.

The tree is gone—last of his race—  
A sylvan monarch true he fell,  
Submissive bowed his elden face,  
Sighed for the land he loved so well.

Home of the free, proud forest land,  
Wood-warrior kings of yore had swayed,  
Thine island once from strand to strand  
But Briton sovereignty obeyed.

Island of liberty, alas !  
Thou, too, must brook an alien hand,  
And yield earth's treasures chiefs amass<sup>1</sup>  
Obedient to a tyrant band.

And thou, O land, art torn amain  
With stream of conflict o'er thy face,  
Fruitless thy children strive again  
To save thee from the slave's disgrace.

The tree is gone—but where he fell  
And kissed the soil with dying groan  
What though rude winter torrents swell  
Across the stream his trunk lies prone.  
But when the spring smiles on the plain,  
Their trail the ivies weave again,  
And, with the south winds on their quest,  
Fresh foliage on his hoary breast,

<sup>1</sup> The Romans worked the tin deposits of Cornwall with forced native labour under the direction of the local chiefs or kings.

Will screen the robin's lowly nest,  
And bid the throstle pipe her strain.  
Just as this tree did live anew  
So with fresh strength Carādoc grew  
A bridge o'er angry waves of strife,  
Saviour to many, guide to few  
That set the stream of Western life.

Rarely he shared the banquets of the great,  
Or graced the pomp and pageantry of state,  
And thrice declined to make his privileged home  
The hall appropriate to the lords of Rome :  
Choosing to suffer, with his trusty clan,  
An alien lordom's long protracted span,  
And share the hardship of his kinsfolk's lot,  
—Under the shadow of his wattled cot—  
Rather than for a season brief enjoy  
Pleased delights, and luxury's transient joy,  
Or fleeting plaudits dearly purchased win  
From Christless princelings breathing licensed sin.

Thus through long years and gloom of darkling  
days  
When bards foretold the parting of the ways,  
Reckless of censure, blind to lures of fame,  
Unstained he bore an ancient honoured name,  
And kindled in the western heart a love  
That no vicissitude might mar or move,  
A mutual spark no tempest's gloom might hide  
On the still wave of time's eternal tide,  
But in calamities affliction bore  
On life's rude sea resplendent shone the more  
And with its gleam all earthly force defied,  
—A love that death itself might not divide.

Free from the shackle of official chain,  
That links responsibility to gain,  
His voice in secret spoke with greater weight  
Than theirs who thronged the council of the great.  
Power's substance his, but closely veiled her form,  
And hid the tongue whose magic ruled the storm.  
And yet his freeborn spirit loathed the part  
So alien to a great heroic heart,  
And scorned the courtier's many-tangled rôle  
That serves for action to the meaner soul.  
His patriot virtue cried for one brave stand  
To drive the Roman from his native land,  
And rouse the isle against a foreign host,  
And win the freedom Boadicea lost.

Gladly his all-observing vision saw  
Legion on legion homeward bound withdraw<sup>1</sup>  
To add fresh vigour to defence's wall,  
And prop the fabric reeling to its fall.  
And oft, soothed with the image of a dream,  
He hails the light of freedom's welcome beam,  
That shining nightlong on his hoary head  
The rude cot gilds with halo beauteous shed,  
And buoyed with hope the soul that longed to see  
The foreign remnant flock down to the sea,  
The snow-white sail unfurl in frantic haste,  
And wing the breezes o'er the liquid waste  
Till sighted clear the pinnacles of Rome  
Rising in turrets over empire's home.

Love of his land a fond delusion nursed,  
And hoped to view, the Southern crew dispersed,

<sup>1</sup> This was about 400 A.D. The final evacuation of Britain by the Romans is placed about 425 A.D.

Britannia, peering from her wooded home,  
To man her cliffs begirt with ocean's foam,  
And combat each invader's grim attack  
With the same mien that erst turned Cæsar back,<sup>1</sup>  
And guard the Northern border 'gainst the race  
Whose trackless raids the Roman sought to trace,<sup>2</sup>  
—Stealing revenge for bold maurauder's guilt  
With blood for blood the wary Pict had spilt—  
He hoped that discipline had taught his stock  
With foreign art to face the foemen's shock,  
And deemed the training of superior skill<sup>3</sup>  
Their breasts with ancient valour must refill,  
And nerve the native arm with greater might  
To stay the onslaught of the fiercest fight.

Alas ! unconscious of the island's fate  
He dimly kenned the Britons fallen state  
Beyond Dunmonium's rugged borderland,  
Where arms' disuse had founded Rome's command,  
And royal stems of like blood with his own  
Effeminate as their sensual lords had grown ;  
Where the rude mass and chiefs of meaner grade  
In varied wickedness had learned to wade,  
And steeped in all the vices of the great  
Grovelled to them they learned to imitate.  
And of the remnant who escaped the taint  
Of grosser infamy that vexed the saint,  
Many indifferent viewed its power to harm,  
But nurtured in the shelter of the Roman arm,  
With every legion's sailing saw a fresh alarm.

<sup>1</sup> After Cæsar's failure to effect the conquest of Britain, the task was relinquished by Augustus and his immediate successors.

<sup>2</sup> The Romans scarcely kept the Picts and Scots beyond the border, and never invaded their territory with success.

<sup>3</sup> As the Roman forces in Britain decreased, they must have been compelled to allow arms to the tribes they trusted and judged best able to use them.

Reluctant they to speed the parting race,  
And broad futurity untutored face,  
But cling to servitude wherewith they're clothed,  
And kiss the rod their freeborn fathers loathed.  
Oh ! who might tell the vengeance Heaven would  
take

Upon the caste, whose greed, for lucre's sake,  
Age upon age, holding the land in fee,  
Enchained a people longing to be free?  
Who crushed 'neath Rome's oppressive iron yoke  
The last faint accents liberty awoke,  
And turned a deaf ear to the piteous sigh,  
Whose echo pierced the ethereal realms on high ;

Nor taught the ancient people they subdued  
The art of war that braceth for the feud,  
And links with martial tie the practised band  
Ready to dare all for the fatherland ;  
But use of arms on pain of death denied  
The toiling clans that tilled the countryside,  
Or, with forced labour, on the fertile plain,  
Woody nature with the drudging sweat of Cain ;

Nor to the skilled director of the plough  
Aught but his keen dividing blade allow ;  
Nor to the swineherd of the pathless wood  
A weapon, 'gainst the wild beast's howling brood,  
Save the frail staff, full helpless for the fray,  
Mocking the wolves that faced his wandering way.  
No brand of God degrades the island race,  
As once it marked the fratricide's disgrace.  
Their crime, their fatherland, their sin  
The native freedom they must ne'er rewin,  
But toiling drain their lifeblood's daily flow  
For full results each hour of light must show

To balk the taskmaster his cruel scourge,  
Or grievous pang the knotted cord may urge,  
And please the officer with thickening breath,  
And live a tyranny far worse than death.

Sword rule that stifled freedom in the man  
Save where Dunmonium knit with many a clan,  
Pledge of their union, mistress of the west  
Still from her tors of granite Druid-blessed,  
With native fastness sheltered the oppressed,  
And screened the cradle of a high-born race  
With mountain shield no despot might deface ;  
Where giant frame and suasive intellect  
From purple sovereignty forced some respect,  
And curbed the legates' ill-restrained abuse  
Of Western skill they turned to Roman use.

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Can we, the children of a later day  
Who weep the curse of early Roman sway,  
Who, in the circle of revolving time,  
Proud empire boast and rule 'neath every clime,  
And give our island's treasured law to all  
Who under Britain's trident chance to fall,  
And justice mete to the remote confines  
Or rule whereon the gold orb ever shines ;  
We, who the van of cultivation lead,  
And progress learn the races we have freed :  
Can we—dare we—another yoke deny  
We laid on Afric's children 'neath a brighter sky ?

Unto the dark-skinned races loud we preach  
And ways more decorous virtuously teach.  
Behold our boasted civilisation walk,  
Hark to her soft humanitarian talk.  
One clasping palm the Bible's truth enfolds  
Her other hand the whisky bottle holds !

Awake Britannia, vanquish, choke, hurl down  
The Demon Drink that threatens thy glorious crown,  
Pierce with thy trident him who mars thy fame,  
And dims the lustre of the noblest name.  
The bearded Turk abstaining puts to shame  
The Christian English who his vices blame.  
With tacit sneer Mahomet's sons deride  
Our messengers who preached the Crucified  
And bear with horror the despatched reproach  
Of patrons far too drunken to approach.

Awake, O land, and extirpate the pest  
Whose taint infects thy bravest and thy best,  
Quench, with the drunkard's recklessness of waste,  
The tippler's craving for another taste  
Of brandy's poison that a firmer road  
To early death doth petrifying pave  
For him who stakes his all on Satan's goad,  
Sped with insanity that strong drink gave,  
And dooms his offspring to a children's grave !  
The untaught savage of the pathless waste  
Retained the wonted orgies of his caste  
At seasons usage seemeth to commend  
And limit gave carousal's hour to end.  
Untaught were they, the blinded tribes, to know  
The wrath of Heaven on gross excess below—



Or palliate vices revelries begin—  
If ignorance crass perchance may lessen sin  
In native darkness they remote from light  
Had yet to view the “ good old English ” sight,  
A mighty people drunk from morn till night—  
Save the boon comrades of a higher sphere  
Who with their midnight bouts the small hours wear  
And drink until another morn appear.

Beasts of the field that roam the spreading plain,  
And they who 'neath a master's yoke have lain,  
O'er the cool streamlets bend their thirst to slake—  
'Tis left for man to drink for drinking's sake.  
Social amenities might fly away  
Were drinks not proffered every hour of day.  
Alas, the temperate host seems not at best  
Who doubts to tipple with his thirsty guest,  
Or quaff in company his choicest wine  
Which visitors might otherwise decline.  
For guests 'tis not good breeding to offend,  
Or say “ No ” to a generous-hearted friend.  
Ofttimes for mere formality's prim sake  
The temperate man his daily rule must break.  
Nor weep the offering for the altar named  
Whose rules conventionality has framed.  
And sometimes host and guest too freely take—  
Each in politeness for the other's sake—  
And then is seen their melancholy fall  
Who but for *breeding* ne'er had drunk at all !

Heroes of clubland who all day pursue  
Card games and hourly wield the billiard cue—  
For the loved pastime feeble is the will  
Without the meed of one inspiring swill—



Say, shall the hero pile the lordly break,  
Sans "S and B" his valorous thirst to slake?  
Or throbbeth brain to shape the card-king's coup  
Unaided with a casual drink or two?

And then the friend, to know 'tis to revere,  
So moderate drinketh nought but Lager Beer!  
"Moderate," quoth he, hark how he will deride  
The brandy drinkers slobbering at his side.  
True Briton he, malt liquor his delight,  
Whisky beneath his elevated height.  
Lordly he strutteth—weighty, best 'twere said—  
Wherewith he drinketh ever daily fed.  
And when, a debtor, fast he hies away  
From lodgments honoured by his *moderate* stay,  
A groaning wagon bears the empty casks away.

Commercial brethren, flying here and there  
From the snug hostels famed for richest fare,  
Good business once could never safely close  
Without a drink to warm the purple nose.  
Denied their liquors they could never feel  
Perfect security in any deal;  
Commercial honour was in sooth at stake  
When brother travellers old traditions break.  
For outraged custom might send death to trades,  
And the brown bag to the infernal shades.<sup>1</sup>

Come death to all but one our mightiest trade,  
Secure to full rest England undismayed,  
Proud of the solvency she must maintain  
Whilst alcoholic revenue flows amain.

<sup>1</sup> These remarks apply to the commercial traveller of the past generation, not to the present.

Who on our bankruptcy will ever bet  
Whilst tipplers drink the nation out of debt,  
And Budget surplus Chancellors oft tell<sup>1</sup>  
At cost of souls their sales have sent to hell?  
From John-o'-Groats to the Lands End we see  
One fruitful cause of drunken misery :  
In city, town, and rustic hamlet lone,  
Seven hostels stand where only need of one  
To tempt the labourer 'ere his day begun.  
At night gin-palaces take up the tale  
In city streets to push the Devil's sale,  
And snare with glittering lure the weak and frail,  
Drawn by the inviting dazzle to the curse  
That mars the body and exhausts the purse.  
Awake, oh land, thy frenzied thirst abate !  
Awake, arise before it is too late,  
And the drink demon lay thee on the plain  
Whence in thy might thou never rise again !  
Cast off the blinding cords that dim thy sight  
And keep thee staggering in thy drunken night ;  
So shall the grim disturber cease to be  
Prompter of crimes thy foes rejoice to see.  
So shall stark lunacy restrain her pace  
And spare the sane the madman's dwelling-place.  
Where hungry famine knocketh at the door  
Thrice happy families shall want no more,  
Our island's stigma once for ever cease,  
And England weep for joy at her release !

<sup>1</sup> Written in 1896. The author has no sympathy with the proposed Licensing Act, 1908.

## BOOK VII.

### THE WOLF-HUNT.

Piramus and Wingela, now Carādoc's guests, after supper request their host to tell them the story of his life and the history of the ancient Britons, which he begins by referring to the great power of the Druids, the boyhood of Carādoc, the wolf-hunt, the blizzard; after which, he remembers how by the camp fire in the forest, surrounded by wolves, Lyle his grandfather had told them the story of Bryt and Corin and the coming of the Trojans to Cornwall; whilst Lyle is still speaking, he is interrupted by the relief band of the Britons, who rescue the hunters from their perilous position, but the old man dies shortly after from the effects of the blizzard. The youth of Carādoc and his passion for hunting.

Now Hesperus his early lamp had lit  
To battle with grey twilight's shades that flit  
Around the old King's dwelling, where reclined  
Those pilgrims who had left their land behind.  
With curious glance the turf roof they scan  
That clothes the structure built on Briton plan,  
And fruitless search the guest-room's every part  
For masonry akin to Irish art.<sup>1</sup>  
Not yet the sturdy Cornish folk had known  
To rear an edifice of native stone;  
But all their clans and chiefs of haught degree  
Roamed the broad woodlands as their fathers free.

For ceiling 'neath the grassy covering lay  
Smoke-blackened skins of savage beasts of prey,

<sup>1</sup> It is generally held the Cornish learnt the art of stone-building from the Irish.

Linked to the toughest wattles of the wood  
That once had spurned the blasts of Boreas' brood,  
And, close united with tenacious clay,  
Denied all ingress to the light of day,  
Save where a cranny in the convex roof  
At times relieved the ascending smoke's behoof,  
For the stout ash-tree fashioned for a door  
No freedom gave the curling mist to soar,  
Nor lattice there to welcome light of sun  
Or breath of air—and chimneys, they had none.  
Disfigured with rude clay's adhesive stain  
Stout logs of oak the wood-built walls sustain.  
On the chill floor distend in crackling mass  
Paludal rushes, culled from some morass,  
Scarce silenced by the sparse-strewn yellow sand  
Brought fresh each morning from the wave-beat  
strand.

And 'gainst the shades of fast encroaching night  
The well-greased rush-lights beat with feeble light,  
And flicker faintly o'er the host's rude board  
That groans 'neath choicest meats the woods afford.  
Humble his lot—not mean his daily fare,  
Nor void his larder of red-deer or hare—  
Child of the forest looking to the South  
Through oak-glades he had chased the boar from  
youth,

And stalked the stag beneath the beech's tent  
With aim unerring the barbed arrow sent,  
Or faced with knotted club the wolves' grim pack  
Whose onset drove the bravest hunters back;  
Nor less in war high-battled long had stood,  
And for his land had waded too in blood,  
Proving a word, old as the Northern skies,  
The hunter's but a warrior in disguise.

Now due assuaged long hunger's keen desire  
All drew to warm them by the pinewood fire,  
For the last frost of springtide yet did chill  
And nightly clothe the bosom of the hill.  
There as they sat did enter damsels twain,  
That to the oaken bower unasked did deign  
Free service of their minstrel art to lend  
In welcome to their King's mysterious friend.  
But ere their ballad either winsome sing,  
Rich wines of Roman vintage he did bring  
Good legate Lœlius' annual offering  
It was his wont with waning of the May  
To grace Carādocus's natal day.  
Then thrice the holy father did decline  
To essay the aroma of Falernian wine.  
"Nor deem it strange," said he, "oh good host  
mine,  
Such offerings rare thine honoured guests refuse.  
'Tis long since we have done as others use  
And still are wont in islet of our birth,  
Where Temperance' voice is drowned in ribald mirth  
And Erin's bards from memory's store supply  
To drunken swains melodious minstrelsy.  
Not abstinence is virtue all I ween,  
But oft a cloke for vices long unseen,  
And vineyards fair, upon this earth have thriven,  
Not void of purpose Heaven to man, hath given.  
Yet for example's sake to all  
Who victims to the Drinkgod fall,  
Now seven summers we have steadfast stood  
Impervious to the draughts of Bacchus' flood;  
And such as now till life's close fain would be  
If thus be stemmed the drunkard's misery."

And quoth Wingela : “ All our bards do tell  
Of warlike deeds Cornubia knoweth well,  
How on these shores Carādocus doth stand  
Favoured of Rome and loved from strand to strand—  
The uncrowned king of Western borderland.  
And ere the wiles of drowsy sleep invite  
To grateful rest, beneath the wing of night,  
Even from thy lips mine ear would learn aright  
Some record, Briton, of thy noble might.  
Full well I wot my mind doth not wisween  
Or falsely image all that thou hast been ;  
For in thy glance romance doth sparkle yet  
With byegone love thy soul may not forget.  
And, prithee, bid thy muse to us unfold  
The primal source of Briton warriors bold  
Whence sprung the race the Cæsars long did dread,  
Whose laud bright fame unto the poles doth spread.  
So shall we hearken till from Eastern bed  
The morrow’s sun his dawning beam shall shed,  
And starless skies all feathered kind invite  
To sing the praise of Him who giveth light.  
Nor dally, King, but unto us portray  
Thine honoured past and Albion’s early day.”

“ My pilgrim guests, would Heaven her power  
Accord me, ’neath this oaken bower,  
To unthread my country’s tangled fate,  
And every filament untie  
Of her age-hallowed history ;  
Could but these lips, untaught, relate  
Each ancient scene from date to date,  
In blazon of Tradition’s eye,  
Full swift, I deem, long hours would fly,

And many a sun had risen and set,  
Ere half my tale had been complete,  
Or ye had heaved one wearied sigh.  
Alas ! good friends, it is not mine  
Old tales of ages to untwine  
From rod and stem of Corin's tree,  
Whence came our Briton ancestry ;  
Or trace observance of a law,  
That filled the Western worlds with awe,  
Or precepts grim, by nations feared  
Whose tenets sages<sup>1</sup> had revered.  
Nor lives there of our race, I trow,  
Nor bardic wit may open now,  
Nor throbbeth fertile brain to cast  
Tithe of the greatness of our past.

Long time the Druids' subtle art  
With matchless cunning played its part,  
And held, secure from vulgar ken,  
Such records<sup>2</sup> as their fathers gave,  
Safe hid in hermit's cell or cave,  
Near rocky wild, or lonesome fen,  
That lay all o'er our forest land.  
Woe to the wight that dogged their train,  
And he who viewed ne'er viewed again—  
They made it death with lingering pain  
To such as broke their harsh command—  
For they had power of life and death  
O'er high and low that groaned beneath  
The rigour of their priestly sway.

<sup>1</sup> Pythagoras is said to have visited Britain and borrowed from the Druid system.

<sup>2</sup> Cæsar tells us the Druids used Greek letters. Is not this fatal to the theory that they were ignorant of writing?

And what they knew the iron hand,  
And counsel of the wizard band,  
With native wit of forest elves,  
Had faithful kept unto themselves,  
And jealous guarded mysteries dear,  
Sons of the Druids ne'er might bear,  
Or whisper in the people's ear.

But, when our fathers would embrace  
The cleansing light, whose Eastern ray  
Had lit the dawn of Jesus' day,  
And many a woodlord of our race  
To bats and moles that mar the lay  
His cherished idols cast away,<sup>1</sup>  
A fear lest converts might hand o'er  
The mystic rolls of Druid lore  
Disturbed the aged Archdruid's breast.  
And all his gods he kneeling blessed  
And cried aloud with awful mien,  
And summoned swift his ancient caste,  
As if that day his last had been,  
And bade them burn on wooded pyre  
What might have lit a people's ire—  
The elden tale how priestcraft base  
Gained lordom of a forest race.

But with that flame there disappeared  
Old relics, we had all revered,  
Of other times now only known  
As on tradition's breath they've flown,  
And yet men say the past best lives  
When oral recollection gives

<sup>1</sup> Lucius, the first Christian king, is placed at about 200 A.D.; but if the tradition is to be believed, the immediate successors of the Apostles themselves first converted Cornwall.



And deeds of byegone ages find  
Remembrance in retentive mind.  
If such be so I cannot say,  
But from my childhood's early day  
I listened oft and pondered o'er  
The tales of heroes gone before.  
Of how my sires had led the fray,  
Or ruled the land with kingly sway,  
And hunters valour reckless shown  
When each had chased the bear<sup>1</sup> alone.  
Nor even now—when years four-score  
Have silvered me with winter's hoar,  
And all I loved have paid the toll  
Death wringeth from the parting soul—  
Nor even now can I forget  
Our camp within the forest set  
With branch and stake and palisade  
To mar each rush the wolves had made,  
With hungry mien and rising ire  
Where skyward flamed our midnight fire.

My grandsire had with early dawn  
His followers for a wolf-hunt drawn  
With note of Roman bugle shrill  
That woke the slumbering snow-capped hill,  
Whose breast bore trace of many a track  
And footprint of the tawny pack.  
And me the hunters all invite  
To join the fray till fall of night.  
'The gods forbid,' our women cried,  
'Carādoc, with the clansmen bide,  
And then upon the hillock's brow  
We'll fashion thee a wolf of snow;

<sup>1</sup> The bear was certainly in Britain 500 B.C., if not later.

Or on an auroch<sup>1</sup> thou shalt ride ' ;  
Ill it befitted babes should go  
And brave the hazards of a chase  
Old foresters had feared to face.  
For I was but a little lad,  
And still in slender habit clad,  
And scarce an infant spear could throw,  
Nor yet had viewed but stag and roe.  
But winter tales the hunters told  
Of wolf and boar on wild and wold  
Had only made my heart more bold  
And filled me with desire to be  
True scion of my ancestry.

So when the good old man did view  
The saddened look my visage drew  
To lose all part in wood-emprie,  
His halloos rent the frosted skies.  
' Art downcast, lad? Dispel thy fears ;  
Nor shall thy spirit fruitless vie  
Nor that keen look within thine eye  
A rebel to thy mother's tears.  
This very morning thou shalt be  
Companion of the chase with me,  
From now until grey-kirtled eve  
The stragglers of the pack receive  
In wood-retreat or rocky way,  
But long ere twilight veil the day  
I'll blood thee with the slaughtered prey.'  
And all that day our wily foe  
Had felt the stab of spearman's throw,  
And many a blood-red track was seen  
That crimsoned far the snow-faced green,

<sup>1</sup> The wild ox.

And many a deep envenomed bite  
Was left to tell of that long fight  
We waged on their marauding horde.  
Ill could our hunters then afford  
Four-footed foe escape or cheat  
The forester's revenge I weet.  
All winter-bound we long had been,  
And there was not a patch of green  
Save where the sunlight here and there  
At times had warmed the wintry air.  
And the proud red-deer torn away  
A brittle ice-sheet from the lay,  
That baulked him of his mossy fare.  
And wolves lean-bellied left the wood  
To filch from every shepherd's brood,  
And many a nursling of our clan  
Was lost for aye to sight of man.  
And women walked in fear of death,  
Whilst some had felt the red thieves' breath  
Blow warm upon them as they fled.

But we had hied that day too far  
With lusty shout of sylvan war  
Whereso the winding glade had led  
Right to our forest's utmost verge,  
Where oak-copse, moor, and fenland merge  
In genial belts of meadow land ;  
Where summer's prime sees golden grain,  
And blue waves from the Southern main  
Will glide unseen from ocean's hand  
To ripple kisses on the strand.  
And thrice my grandsire cried in vain,  
And ireful bade his chiefs restrain  
The frenzied ardour of the band.

They heeded not nor reason knew  
Till daylight's beam more feeble grew  
And the harsh sea-mew's warning cry  
Told of a tempest in the sky.

Too late we turned—the storm-winds' roar  
Resounds o'er surf vast billows pour,  
And snow-chilled currents from the pole  
In blinding clouds white ruin roll,  
And veiled the fenny heath-clad moor,  
O'er which benighted land-birds soar  
In panic fear to wing their way  
Where blasts with leafy giants play.

'Twere vain to paint our headlong flight;  
Who of our troop forgot that night?  
The blizzard's fierce ice-laden breath  
And frozen blast was worse than death—  
That piercing keen North-western blast,  
When every moment seemed our last,  
And man and beast adread did fear  
The end of all things looming near.  
Then wonderment had died with hope,  
And we thought only how to cope  
With certain doom—like antelope  
Or sobbing red-deer turned to bay  
Who's foiled his trackers many a day;  
With foaming flank and piteous sigh  
The teardrops moist his desperate eye,  
No course to turn, no strength to fly,  
He only museth how to die—  
As antlered chieftain so then we  
All in our last extremity.

And yet my grandsire in that hour  
Found time despite the snowy shower

An untanned wolf-skin to untie  
And bare-backed faced the polar sky.  
Amid the blizzard's madding roar  
One ruddy strip amain he tore  
And bound me to him with a thong  
That mocked the tempest's challenge-song.  
Thus 'twas my chance to cheat the deep  
That lashed with foam the rocky steep  
And foil the doom the storm-fiends gave.  
Three of our crew in Southern wave.

But I have wandered from my tale  
How Lyle, my grandsire, did unveil  
Those figures of the forest-dead,  
And visions clear of Britain's past  
Will haunt my dreams till life be sped.  
Sweet is remembrance early wed  
To bygone scenes and golden store  
Of all a nation's elden lore.  
That glory-light traditions throw  
Upon the warrior-hero's brow,  
That fitful gleam that tender clings  
Unto the past of forest kings,  
Was never meant to die or fade  
Among the peoples it had made.  
Yet there are tongues that oft deride  
The first-fruits of a nation's pride,  
And there are those of alien blood,  
Such as the base that ever would  
Defraud the children of the free.  
But this old story of the wood  
Only the grave can take from me.

The storm had ceased, and waning dread  
Cast only for a camp fire red

Whose ray-flash bright might set to fear  
The grim wolves packing in our rear.  
Breathless, benumbed, we'd gained at last  
A respite from the cruel blast,  
Where tall pine-monarchs light of mood  
The blue skies beckoned, they had wooed,  
And beeches nude sighed to the lea  
In strains of sylvan amity.  
There many a winter sun had thawed  
The ice-bound soil with branches strawed,  
And of the tree that once was gay  
In an abandoned turf-hut lay  
Many an oak-log's withered spray  
Some hunter left for future day.  
And of the ash's seasoned bough  
Our merry men soon found enow  
To under-faggot set the spark  
Around whose flame the gaunt wolves bark  
'Mid lurid glare the woodfires throw.

'Twas there within the forest glade,  
When danger's threat all sleep forbade  
And hunters strove to wile away  
The longsome hours ere morning's ray  
With jest and tale and shrewd surmise;  
When every speaker posed as wise  
We listen while the chiefs contend  
And specious talk with reason blend  
Whether the lineage they embrace  
Was Gallic or our Kings must trace  
From Albion's woods their Briton race.  
I heard the old man intervene  
And in his tone a touch of spleen :  
' At variance yet, then woe betide  
The heated zeal wherewith you chide,

And full as ignorant each I trow  
As squirrel perched on yonder bough ;  
But if you fain regard would lend  
Or listen to the Druid's friend  
Your strife perchance I may allay  
Nor fruitless here unwind to-day  
The tangled maze of yesterday.  
Full blinded yet you wander all ;  
Seek not your primal seats in Gaul  
Nor deem the source of Britain's might  
This isle of oaks, once Alba hight,  
From other lands our royal name  
Cornubia's savage mood did tame,  
And Druid Chronicles had shown  
How many lustres silent gone  
Since your old fathers did descry  
In sundown of a summer sky  
A stranger fleet unawed draw nigh  
Whose galleys bore the doughty twain  
Should king it o'er the Western main.

An alien fleet, an alien crew,  
And little of your soil they knew,  
Nor in the guise of war they came  
Nor willed to kindle battle's flame,  
Their captain, Brute, of giant frame,  
Or Bryt, as earlier bards did name,  
—He from Æneas' loins had sprung  
The goddess-born hoar ages sung—  
And with him sailed a Trojan true  
The bold Corineus 'cross the blue,  
But from the year those heroes lit  
On island thrones whereon they sit,  
Though Bryt, from Alba Longa come,  
Had Albion named his second home,

Antiquity hath ever writ  
*Brytania* from *Ænean* Bryt.  
But mightiest *Corin*<sup>1</sup> fain would choose  
The Western land of her he woos—  
*Nuba*, a bride in Latin tongue,  
The race *Æneas* dwelt among—  
And so *Cornubia* bards did call  
Who sung the marriage festival.

I said they came<sup>2</sup> in guise of peace  
And scarce to conflict thought had lent  
Could they from clan-feud find release  
And settle with the isle's consent.  
But I have heard white Druids say,  
Whose sires kept record of that day,  
How Brutus held a mighty shield  
That scarce three giant-born might wield,  
Gift of his grandsire mighty targe,  
Inlaid with gold upon the marge,  
And many a motto on its field  
Old Trojan art did erst devise  
With varied skill and artifice.  
How on its broad expanse there lit  
A hundred arrows winged for Bryt.  
How the barbed shafts in proud disdain  
The hero scatters on the main,  
And 'mid the trump wood-warriors ring  
The island claims her foe for king.

Moons upon moons of glorious ray  
Had shone on Brutus' royal sway  
When far from sweet Italia's main  
His spirit fled to Heaven's Hall.

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, Corineus. He married a Cornish Briton.

<sup>2</sup> *I.e.*, from Alba Longa, in Italy.



Above his corse no monument  
Looms dim in shades of evenfall,  
Nor storied verse to time hath lent  
A record fame would e'er recall.  
Only this wood-tale I repeat  
Reveals the Trojan's Western seat—  
A fragment of the Druid strain  
That welcome memory brings again,  
For I do love the story well.  
But where he sleeps what tongue may tell?  
Upon the mountain-top or fell  
Or by the willows' weeping train?  
Perchance within a forest cave  
Where Thamís' winding stream doth lave  
The entrance to a hero's grave.

And some——' But here wood-halloos broke  
The hunter's story night-bespoke—  
All that I heard my grandsire say  
Beside the camp-fire's cheerful ray.  
Right joyous greet we boy and man  
Relief bands from our faithful clan,  
But their blithe wood-notes clear, that drew  
Responsive echoes from the dale,  
With frosted face of morning pale  
Entrenched upon the old man's tale.  
What more he'd tell we never knew;  
Alas! the snowstorm's icy blast  
The morrow's eve his spirit passed,  
And my *first* wolf-hunt was his *last*!

We laid him by the Dinas<sup>1</sup> turn  
And maidens wept beside his urn,

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, the hill Castle-an-Dinas, whose great height would commend it to the Britons for the interment of the ashes of a great warrior.

And with the hill-ash berries wreathed  
The truest heart that ever breathed.  
But from that day my soul did yearn  
For heather, moor, and copse and fern,  
And so the woods my daily joy  
I loved the red-deer from a boy.  
To lure the boar e'en from his lair,  
Chase the wild-ox or coney snare,  
What gauds with such might hope compare?  
And who may paint the magic thrill  
The madding sense the pulse doth thrill,  
Or count the raptures of the chase,  
Last glories of a sylvan race  
The purpled Cæsars once did dread?

Image of War without his guilt,  
High o'er the wood-gods raise thine head  
And lead me still where'er thou wilt  
With stars for lamp and moss my bed.  
What pleased joys so sweet can be  
As hunting-moons have been to me?  
O copses rustling melody,  
O woodlands green that soothe the eye,  
There's music in your summer sigh.  
What though my daytide long be passed,  
I can but love you to the last,  
And in the beech-glade let me die !''

## BOOK VIII.

### THE BATTLE.

Carādoc further tells Piran and Wingela the story of the Cornish Queen Guendoline, daughter of Corin, who, after succeeding to her father's crown, marries her cousin Locrine, the son of Bryt, but is supplanted by Lady Estrilde in her husband's affections, and finally banished, with her son, by him from his Silurian Court.

In revenge for this Guendoline, who retires to Cornwall, collects a great army in the West to invade Siluria and obtain the united crowns of Cornwall and Britain for Maidan her son, the rightful heir. But after a drawn battle, her generals wishing to retire, she invents the scythed car, and with these chariots again advances into Siluria, where, after a second battle which lasts from dawn till sunset, she wins the Battle of the Severn and takes her husband prisoner.

In the battle Uxela commands the Western centre and Kymar and Danvon their right and left wings respectively, Guendoline holding the chariots in reserve.

Locrine commands the Silurians in person. Towards the afternoon after desperate fighting he succeeds in breaking the western right and unhorsing Kymar, but Uxela and the victorious Danvon rallying to his assistance hold the advancing Silurians in check until a report comes of the queen's death, and, Uxela falling, all seems lost.

But at the critical moment Guendoline, advancing right and left simultaneously with the scythed chariots, the Silurians are seized with panic fear, and Danvon and Kymar, rallying their shattered forces for a supreme effort, the Western Britons gain a complete victory.

“ Now Brutus left as sovereign heir  
Imogen's son, Locrinus fair,  
Fairer in mien than purpose he,  
And lust-possessed to last degree,

But valiant as his sire in war—  
Alas ! that roving love should mar,  
Or pale the beam of glory's star,  
He, yet a beardless boy, 'tis said,  
His cousin Guendoline had wed—  
Sole heiress she to Corin's crown  
Which thus he linked unto his own.

But, ere another crescent's dawn  
Had silvered to maturing ray,  
Since Druids blessed their Hymen-day,  
The King, to Lady Estrilde drawn,  
In cool retreat of wooded bower  
His spouse forsook for paramour.  
They say he loved her beauty rare  
With all the passion of despair,  
While feigned indifference' subtle cord  
The closer bound a sighing lord.  
But not to this war-strain belongs  
The count of virtue's many wrongs—  
Be mine to sing the battle-green  
And vengeance of the warrior-queen.

For, since the Celtic age began,  
Immutable it e'er hath been ;  
Woe to the sex, when selfish man,  
Who gives the law that should befriend,  
The law hath shapen to his end !  
So Guendoline black lustres three,  
Forgotten in captivity,  
The daily bread of misery ate,  
Till Lady Estrilde, blind to fate,  
Had wreaked her malice' wanton hate,  
And Locrine's edict ruthless sent  
A blameless queen to banishment.

And, with the clear-famed lady, went,  
An exile from his father's tent,  
The boy who in a prison lone,  
Far from the western billows' foam,  
With captive tears, for joy outpoured,  
She bore unto her tyrant lord.

Many a year had Maidan known  
To feel a mother's ills his own.  
A captive, from his natal year,  
With her he mingled every fear,  
And shared with her the little hope  
That sometimes lit their lattice' cell ;  
Of tender years, too young to cope  
With grief or know those sorrows well  
On which his mother's heart did dwell,  
Yet, by the same hand both undone,  
Their joys were few, their sorrow one.

On his fair cheek the tender down  
Of youth's first summer scarce had blown,  
And, still a prisoner of the throne,  
The rightful heir had never known  
The fresh delights unsought that come  
Each day to a united home ;  
But on his forehead firm was set  
The stamp of nature's coronet,  
Such as high birthdom's solace brings  
The banished sons of hero kings.  
Now, as the mother weeping pressed  
Her hands in anguish to her breast,  
Upon the wild, in angered mood,  
The cause of future wars he stood.

But, as the mid-June heats they flee,  
And seek the forest's canopy

That shadowed every woodland lea,  
Or to Dunmonium wend their way,  
To gain the borders of the free,  
Cornubia's daughter swore that she,  
Ere summer's noon should come again,  
Would gather north a warrior train  
To menace Locrine's island sway,  
And Lady Estrilde rue the day  
When she had scorned Corineus' name  
And set his only child to shame.

Soon had the western Britons lent  
To justice' prayer a glad consent,  
And scarce the hawthorn's fragrance filled  
Our dales with perfumes breathed afar,  
Than all Dunmonium's valleys thrilled  
With busy din of coming war.  
Hark to the war-bards' piercing cry !  
There's battle in the springtide air ;  
' A Maidan,' one and all reply,  
' A Maidan for the northern foc,  
We will requite our lady fair ;  
On, comrades, on to strike the blow !'

By moorland flood of Isca's stream,<sup>1</sup>  
In moonlight's ray their weapons gleam  
Of sires and youths, in wrathful host,  
Each chief had called from either coast  
To open battle's blood-red seam.  
And ill it me doth now beseem  
To count those clans that faithful came  
Down every cragside, slope, and steep,  
The cold hill-ash's castle-keep.

<sup>1</sup> The Ex.

The woods took up the warriors' cry,  
And zephyr-kissed the copses sigh,  
Their vernal echoes of the fray.  
Hunters and wood-lords, in array,  
Had girt them for the battle-day;  
Even from Pendinus<sup>1</sup> chiefs had sped  
O'er rugged tor and river-bed,  
High-battled long in roundelay;  
And many a stripling left the mead  
Where weeping maidens knelt to pray.

And all that painted host, they say,  
Cornubia's daughter led away,  
As, once again, her voice did plead,  
And bade those warriors yet recede  
Whose heart went forth not to the fray.  
Hers was a glance more dread to view,  
Than all the queens that Asia knew,  
And she by Corin, bards maintained,  
From girlhood's noon to battle trained,  
The art of war herself had learned  
Locrinus ere her love he spurned—  
When from Cornubia she had come,  
Her father's daughter, born to rule  
With method kind and counsel cool  
A people wedded to their home,  
Who, uncompelled, will e'er obey  
The iron of a tempered sway.

So, when a doubtful battle's gleam  
Had flashed by Savrine's forest-stream,  
And respite dear Locrinus bought  
With heroes' blood upon the plain,  
And her own captains she had taught  
Disdained to join the fray again,

<sup>1</sup> The modern St. Ives.

For causes known to Druids best  
The clans unto their lady pressed,  
And grey-haired chieftains deemed it meet  
To homeward march in night-retreat,  
Till fates more kindly had beguiled  
Locrinus to their fastness wild.  
With all the tiger's stealthy hate  
Her unquenched spirit did debate  
How woman's craft might conquer fate,  
Till, blazing fierce against her lord,  
Her god-like soul inventive soared,  
And called to aid the scythéd car  
To stem the tide of northern war.  
And to the chariot bade them lead  
The war-horse proud of Isca's breed  
—'Twas seven days' travel to the cave,  
Whence Danvon's<sup>1</sup> chief the coursers drave  
Of mightier frame than such as now  
Pasture upon her clovered brow.

O ! Isca<sup>2</sup> with the placid stream,  
How dear thy moor to me has been.  
Like as the war-steed's heart doth burn,  
And dying for the battle yearn,  
So life's last winter I would be  
Renewing lover-tryst with thee.  
Haunt of the red-deer, sweeter far  
Than all the pomp and vaunt of war,  
In my bright boyhood I had known  
Thy spreading moorland forest-grown ;  
And, if the quarry's course had led  
Far from thy river's fountain-head,

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, Devon's.

<sup>2</sup> The Ex.



Chase-wearied oft I found a seat  
Upon thy heath-couch honey-sweet,  
And at the foot of nature's throne  
Had communed with my God alone.  
No voice of man to break the still  
That lay upon the fern-clad hill,  
Only the wood-hound's cheery note  
The silver mists of morning smote,  
Was wafted with the briar rose  
To cheat the hunter's brief repose.

And, if the future's hand decree  
An end to boar-hunts on thy lea,  
And the grim she-wolf's ruddy brood  
No more infest thy smiling wood,  
The gorse-gold waste, the sparkling linn,  
Far from the city's busy din,  
The moss-grown glen and heather spray  
Where I first viewed the light of day,<sup>1</sup>  
Those purpled hills I think I see,  
There shall the red-deer's home still be  
When Lyle<sup>2</sup> and all his blood are gone !

Now with due flight of white-robed May,  
A moonless night on summer day  
Her sable mantle close had drawn,  
And the last star's faint glimmer wan  
On woodland wild and forest-lawn  
Made haste to shed his parting ray,  
Nor had a sun-gleam lit the green  
When from her moss-couch Guendoline,  
With spirit thirsting for the fray,  
Had set her hillmen in array.

<sup>1</sup> Carādoc was born on Exmoor.

<sup>2</sup> The grandfather of Carādoc.

There, on the plain, her eye might see  
The flower of western liberty,  
Biding their lady-captain's call.  
And oft her courser snuffed the breeze,  
Or restive pawed the primrose leas,  
As, 'twixt the ranks, she fearless hied  
To cheer the warriors woad-bedyed,  
With words of cheer to strengthen all.

And oft the heir, unto their view,  
The youthful Maidan high she drew,  
So all might cause of battle ken,  
Till peals her voice, through glade and glen,  
And thus accosts her painted men :  
' Uxela's<sup>1</sup> chief our midmost lead,  
For pride of place is glory's meed—  
And who shall better guide the fray  
Than hero of Corineus' day?  
And you, my sylvan bowmen true,  
Whatso he biddeth see 'tis done—  
Right well I trow the foe shall rue  
Your death-steeped arrows veil the sun—  
Nor quit the plain till victory won,  
Or he doth deem their warriors run.

And to my right I do assign  
That doughty wood-lord of our line,  
Who breath of treason heedeth not,  
Kymar, my mother's sire begot,  
Of spotless ancestry divine—

<sup>1</sup> The ancient Lostwithiel.

And Danvon's<sup>1</sup> chief the left shall guide—  
Haught chief, whose valorous deeds of eld  
Our distant<sup>2</sup> clans together weld—  
But Maidan, joy of mother's pride,  
With me on scythéd car shall ride.  
And I command each charioteer  
That to the host he draw not near  
To mar the stroke of battle's play,  
But, if Cornubia's star shall wane,  
Nor my stout spearmen hold the plain,  
Then to the van, with me away,  
And ours shall be to turn the tide  
'Gainst perjured king and mistress-bride.

But seemeth me their foremost peer  
'Twixt morning mists that veil the mere.  
To arms ! my men, the hour hath come  
That dooms Locrinus' forestdom.  
What though a woman guide the fray,  
A woman's wit may win the day.  
Banished, bereft, disgraced, shall I  
Sink 'neath a wanton's treachery?  
Not for myself I battle here.  
We have the right. Our cause is clear.  
It is your prince who piteous calls—  
Your prince, driven from his father's halls,  
The wood-god's gift, this beauteous boy,  
Sure pledge I thought of Hymen joy,  
And dearer than sweet life to me.  
Is there no vengeance for the free?  
Or must my darling ever rove  
An exile for his mother's love?

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, Devon's.

<sup>2</sup> *I.e.*, the Devonshire men.

O ! by his forebears held divine,  
Come join your vengeance thirst to mine,  
And feed the fires of my hate  
E'en with the ashes of the great.  
Death cometh once, but glory ne'er  
The hero's laurels did inter.  
On, on, ye sons of forestry,  
'Tis yours to vanquish or to die !'

With that a javelin deft she threw,  
An ashen one, so far it flew  
As mocked the gazer's searching ken,  
But well its import Locrin knew,  
And sounds his challenge up the glen.

With battle shriek the hosts rush on,  
The blue woad on each visage shone,  
And plumes fantastic waved on high,  
Responsive to the warriors' cry,  
All nude, as, erst in Eden's bower,  
Our parents ere temptation's hour.  
It was as if the deeps had given  
Their sea-fiends grim of azurn hue,  
Or the lost angels, fallen from Heaven,  
Their feud on earth with God renew !  
There, 'twixt such cries as anguish gave,  
Trilled softer strains of women brave ;  
Or Druids, chanting 'mid the din,  
Prayed Heaven's wrath on Locrin's sin,  
Or waved the war torch flaming high  
To cheer the clans to victory.

And old-time records once did yield  
What captains spurned that flowered field

Where cowslips by a rillet's bank,  
And prairie grasses thirstful drank  
Dew-decked with every dawn of day.  
But hard it is to troll, they say,  
Another minstrel's roundelay,  
Tho' well I deem our bards have sung  
Long doubtful yet the issue hung,  
Till, like a flight of seamews grey,  
November's tempest doth assail,  
Fruitless the ocean brood essay  
To skim the bosom of the bay,  
Or 'gainst the storm-fiends wing the gale,  
And they all scattered on the wave  
Whose crest the stars of Heaven would lave,  
So Locrin's frenzied whirlwind drave  
Good Kymar's ranks asunder reft.

His spear was knapped, his bow was cleft,  
And, leaping from his raven steed,  
Whose death-scream filled the daisied mead,  
But scarce recovered from his fall,  
The exulting king he loud doth call,  
And, conjuring him by Brutus hight  
To wood-sword combat, would invite  
The King his honour now to save.

But still our left, undaunted, gave  
Unbroken front to Northern wave,  
The rathripe youth, the bearded sire,  
Their blue eyes gleamed with martial fire,  
And old Uxela's dauntless clan  
In close-locked phalanx, man to man,  
Defiance bade Siluria's van.  
Unerring yew-bow flung aside,  
Now flows the battle's purple tide,

Where stalwart spearmen firm withstand  
Each onslaught of opposing band,  
And crimson havoc holds his reign  
Intact upon the cumbered plain.

Targe against targe, and spear 'gainst spear  
Resounding frights the crystal mere,  
Encircled with sedge and marshy reed  
Whence evetide calls the coot to mead,  
And every water nymph made speed  
To leave her morning bath so clear  
And quit the sylvan beauties dear,  
Disturbed with battles grim affray.  
For all upon the clovered spray  
The wounded and the dying lay,  
And hatred deeper in each eye  
For which death's spectre lingered by.

And here and there fought hand to hand  
Wood-giants grim with oaken brand,  
Whose weird shriek wrung from savage breast  
Disturbed the trembling mountain's crest,  
And set to fear the prey-bird's brood  
That hovered round the neighbouring wood.  
But hark ! amid such echoes drear,  
A traitor's larum soundeth clear,  
" The queen is dead, your freedom sold,  
Back to your hills, Cornubians bold."

At warning of the traitorous wight  
For safety all did turn to flight,  
Save remnant of the faithful few  
Great Danvon and Uxela drew  
Devotion with their blood to seal  
And perish for their country's weal.

Thrice happy they, whose deaths had freed  
The mother's hearth and father's mead.  
Long waits the dear wife, troubled sore,  
Her hero at the forest's door,  
And crave her little ones full long  
The home-returning warrior's song.  
But they will never view again  
The absent on his native plain;  
For he is gone beyond recall  
His sire had loved more dear than all.  
Silent the voice whose sweetness drew  
Wood-echoes silvered soft with dew  
Within the glade at evenfall.  
See how his comrades with him fall,  
The war god's victims, not a few,  
Bright with the gleam of glory's hue.

Corse upon corse imbrues the moor,  
And reeks the dripping turf with gore—  
The flower of all our clans, I weet,  
Outbattled with a spy's deceit.  
The forest-flood, the river-lawn,  
All ruby bright with sunset shone,  
But still Siluria's host rushed on,  
Or blood-mad forced the corpse-strewn lay,  
Where that same morn had danced the fay.  
Uxela falls—now hope hath fled  
The valour-proven Danvon led—

Then Guendoline, in her own time,  
Her charioteers gave due command,  
To right and left, in glittering line,  
Swift succour lend the desperate band.

Her milk-white steeds, in majesty,  
Like sandbirds skim the blood-stained green.  
High o'er the carnage sounds her cry  
' I am Corineus' child, your queen, '

And in the twilight's misty shade,  
The cruel war-car's scythéd blade  
Red havoc on their vanguard played,  
And, rallying swift our duped that flew,  
Close-serried all fresh courage drew.  
What though the sun his course had run,  
And we outnumbered three to one !  
His is a task, I trow, full light,  
Whose friendly stars compelling fight,  
And multitude an empty boast  
To kingdoms 'pendent on an host  
Unwonted warfare will dismay.

For in the foeman's face was seen  
Astonied fear and panic dread,  
As puzzled warriors' disarray  
Bespoke Locrinus' waning sway,  
And we, who marked, intuitive deemed  
Our fortunes fairer than had seemed,  
And held the day already won.

Then Danvon bold, true Briton son,  
' Behold, they halt, they turn, they fly !  
On, wood-lords, on to victory. ''  
And, action adding to his cry,  
Waved he his direful blade on high,  
But first the wood-gods suppliant prayed  
That they would breathe their favouring aid,



And watching still the vault of Heaven,  
With western war-pœan cheerful given,  
To final charge exulting led  
The choicest youth his hill had bred.

And now Siluria's men have fled,  
And groans the valley, heaped with dead,  
And captive Locrin, left to muse  
Upon his consort's battle-ruse.  
Perchance his thought recalled the day  
When to Cornubia first he came,  
And her hill-maidens twined the may,  
And Druids kindled Hymen's flame.  
For torch of love now torch of war ;  
For wedded wreath no wreath but fame  
His dying warriors' brows to crown.  
The scythéd cars had swept them down  
Upon the green like meadow hay.  
And, from the copse-wood reft of sun,  
Flesh-loving ravens, one by one,  
Whereso the vanquished crowded lay,  
Would feast them on the yet warm prey.

But see, beneath the moon's white ray  
That lights the starry roof of heaven,  
The queen pursuer, on her way,  
Her steeds unto the winds hath given.  
Not swifter from her favourite seats  
The love queen quits the summer heats,  
Nor love-tipped arrow of her boy  
More rapid flown to man's annoy.  
A hundred trophies deck her car,  
And flushed her lily cheek with war.  
Loud hiss her javelins from afar.

All red her coursers' hoofs with blood,  
Wing they the breeze by torrent flood;  
White sweat-drops fleck each glossy mane;  
They pant, they sigh, they pant again,  
Yet she, unmoved, will not draw rein,  
But on to vengeance ruthless pressed  
The warrior queen in sooth confessed."

## BOOK IX.

### THE STORY OF SAVRINE.

After the battle Guendoline, pursuing the flying host, catches sight of Lady Estrilde and her daughter Savrine fleeing towards the Severn, and, pressing on, comes up with them just as they reach the river, where Lady Estrilde falls pierced with the Queen's arrows. The raging Queen then drowns the innocent maiden Savrine, who, dying, gives her name to the stream.

“ IN the mid-plain an old oak-tree  
Had spread his royal canopy  
To give the red-deer welcome shade.  
There, where the breezes sportive played,  
The Lady Estrilde climbed to see  
Her Western rival bite the lea,  
And sojourn with the turtle made,  
To mark her lover-King's return.

But, when his host at eve did turn,  
And safety woo with panic flight,  
Even as the dove, in danger's hour,  
Forsakes in haste her green watch-tower  
Swift from her eyrie to alight,  
Her haughty face aghast with fear,  
She to Siluria would repair,  
And with her fled a daughter dear,  
More famous than her mother fair.

Savrine, sweet as the briar-rose  
Or honeysuckle spray that blows  
Its fragrance from the hedgerow's bower.

She was a little forest-maid  
Whose budding charms to view displayed  
A woman's beauty ; for each hour  
To childhood's grace had lent a power,  
Once only seen 'twas ever missed,  
And nature from her brow had kissed  
The frown that on her mother's played.  
And on her cheek had Hebe breathed  
A flush of health-bloom that enwreathed  
Her charms with beauty's native dye,  
As if life's winter never might  
Dispel or dim the vital light  
That sparkled in her fairy eye.

Sweet girlhood she had scarce outgrown,  
Nor her dark tresses braid had known,  
But there was music in her sigh  
As summer winds that rustle by,  
And in her voice a silver ring  
Fresh joyance to the ear would bring,  
Like purling of a crystal spring,  
Or fountain-drops that soothing beat  
Their rhythm in a rock-retreat.

In her was linked with beauty rare  
From childhood's morn the winsome air  
So seldom seen in one so fair.  
Her tender heart could never brook  
The merest slight, or one cold look  
From those her virgin fancy loved.  
Nor jealous she, constrained or sad,  
But in her temper blithe and glad ;  
And when with maiden friends she roved,

Her merry laughter filled the glade.  
 And, if her snow-white throat bewrayed  
 The music to the copse she made,  
 The wild birds to her call would come,  
 And fallow deer from covert roam  
 By riverside, or seek the plain  
 To hearken to her sylvan strain.  
 And so, amid a doting clan,  
 More lovely than the wood-rose wan,  
 As nature's spring-bloom Savrine grew—  
 The sweetest flower the forest knew.

It is the hour when moonlight's ray  
 Hath chased the gloaming's dim away,  
 And midnight shadows silent glide  
 Upon the silvered countryside;  
 What time day-slumbering beasts do rouse,  
 To prey upon the herds that browse,  
 And hie them to the night-cooled rill,  
 Where hart and hind would drink at will.  
 But thou, bright blossom, must thy span,  
 In springtide's waning, draw to close,  
 And wither on the weeping lea?  
 In June the briar fairest blows;  
 May not Siluria's virgin rose  
 Its full midsummer see?

Alas ! the flowers we love the best,  
 How soon their glories haste to fade !  
 The violet, that hides her crest  
 In covert of her leafy shade,  
 Not long for man's delight was made.  
 Those lilies of the valley blest,  
 Robed in their native purity,

The primrose opening with the dawn,  
The king-cup on the river-lawn,  
The cowslip lurking in the lea,  
The daffodilly, Lentide's son,  
The wood-hid bluebell—every one  
That waits the smile of summer's sky  
Unfolds its beauty but to die !

The breeze is cool, and moonbeams still,  
Clear-mirrored in each fount and rill  
Within the forest glade,  
And, deep entranced with starlight's wile,  
The night her course hath stayed awhile;  
But woodland visions now must smile  
No more for thee, O maid.

Why pales thy mother's face so wan?—  
That face whence banished hope hath fled—  
The deer must tremble for her fawn,  
And fears the hare the greyhound's tread.  
So have I seen the partridge cower  
When well within the kestrel's power  
The russet brood her care hath reared  
Beneath the barley's golden beard.  
Nor less than glance of falcon keen  
Guendoline's cruel eye, I ween,  
Her timid prey did ruthless scan.  
But she, with princeling Madan hight,  
Must from her armed car alight  
Where swift a mighty torrent ran—  
Ill doth befit the river-mead  
Or fenny glebe the chariot's speed—  
This hand her firstborn's brow caressed  
That pressed an yew-bow to her breast,

And quiver full of arrows keen  
—Sure harvesters of death were seen.

Remorseless now her lithesome tread  
Like hind's feet to her victim sped,  
Or as, on some aerial peak,  
In her despite, the mountain-roe,  
By winter storm or hunters pressed,  
Forsakes her fastness' snowy crest  
And safety in the woods must seek,  
Or hies her to the glen below;  
No less fleet Cornubia's queen  
Vengeance on the twain would wreak—  
Fill the cup of wanton's teen.  
'Twas the time when Fays do play,  
Gamboling ere the morning ray,  
Nor yet viewed the tranquil moon,  
Sailing to her midnight noon,  
Chilly dew-drops that should soon  
Bathe the feet of purple day.  
But upon the river-bank,  
Where her blood-stained tresses dank  
In the pale stars' trembling gleam  
Crimsoned now the running stream—  
In her bosom arrows twain,  
And her deerskin torn amain,  
Lady Estrilde gasping lay.

She had turned her lovely face,  
'Wildered with the hopeless race,  
Suppliant by the river stood.  
Now, like pard in wrathful mood,  
Gloats the victress in her blood.

But the lone Savrine, pale with dread,  
Weeping for her mother dead,  
Frenzied hate the queen bade throw  
To the forest-flood below.  
Cried the damsel in despair,  
Kneeling in the sedges' lair :

' Me, guiltless of a mother's sin,  
To death untimely dost thou doom.  
Oh, say—what fury burns within  
To drown me in my maiden bloom.  
By the common blood we share,  
By our Druids' sacred grove,  
By thy children, sovereign, spare  
Innocent fruit of guilty love.  
What recks my life? If I be fair,  
Who with thy radiance may compare?  
A child I wander yet the dale.  
What 'vails my frailty to assail?  
Great lady, by the gods above,  
O do me not to die.'

And did a dryad's voice entreat,  
No lovelier form than at her feet  
Had met that warrior lady's eye.  
But, if faint pity in her breast  
Did plead a hapless captive's quest,  
Moved with distressful beauty's sigh,  
'Twas pity on a heart of steel  
That hatred's frost doth soon congeal—

Such as a lioness may feel,  
When deep the mountain-vale she'll roam,  
Unmindful of her whelps at home,  
Till hunters' cries, that fill the wood,



Recall her to her tawny brood,  
And dormant fires revive anew,  
When once her rock-cubs meet her view.  
For, chanced it to the savage queen,  
As on a wood-spear she did lean,  
To her proud glance a moment came  
The heir of all his race and name.

A look his heated visage wore,  
As if a foeman pressed him sore ;  
Trembled his limbs, and on his face  
As if for life he'd run his race.  
Then venom flashed in her blue eye,  
And all the naiad-train did weep,  
And wood-gods murmured in their sleep  
To hear the warrior-queen's reply :

' What tho' 'tis not thy mind to steal  
A brother's birthright, but forbear  
All clan-feud with thy father's heir,  
Whenas hereafter 'gainst our weal  
The clansmen to thy beauty kneel,  
And call to mind thy mother's name,  
Is there no danger one so fair,  
May witch rebellion into flame?

But, as for mercy, I'll compare  
My pity for a royal line  
With that thy parents showed to mine.  
Thee, eldest of a base-born brood,  
To yonder river I foredoom ;  
There seek the traitress of the wood,  
And with thy mother find a tomb.'

With that, unto the stream she gave  
The hapless Savrine, born to woe;  
But her clear voice, from deeps below,  
The river-god, all pitying, knew,  
And lifts, from sands of golden bed,  
O'er torrent's flow his oozy head  
To kiss the form he yearned to wed.  
And, raised a moment on his breast  
That soothed her to her watery rest  
On the cool ripple of the wave,  
Her dying word the damsel gave :  
' My life I lose, my friends, my all,  
And now must glide the wave beneath,  
Not unrequited in my death ;  
For nature loved me in my fall.  
To thee, dear river, I bequeath  
The memory and virgin woes  
Of her they called Siluria's rose ;  
And, since 'tis willed I may not live,  
My name unto thy flood I give,  
Which Savrine<sup>1</sup> men shall ever call.' "

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, Severn.

## BOOK X.

### BRENNUS AND BELINUS.

Carâdoc now tells his guests the story of Mulmutius, the great Cornish Briton whose genius for war once more brought the various tribes of the island under the dominion of one king. But after the death of Mulmutius his two sons Brennus and Belinus quarrel, and a great battle between the two factions ends in the utter defeat of Brennus, who is hotly pursued to the woods by Belinus and the Druids associated with him.

As a last resource the fugitive takes refuge in the hollow trunk of an old beech tree, thus completely baffling his pursuers, who later on camp for the night under its very branches. But in the dead of night Brennus frightens them all away by counterfeiting the voice of his dead father the old king.

As a result of this the Druids declare the person of Brennus sacred, and most of them transfer their allegiance to him, although a large part of the army still remains faithful to Belinus.

On hearing of this Brennus, advised by his mother Cornuena, decides to surrender to his elder brother. But Belinus, declining to forego his vengeance, it is determined to settle the whole affair in the presence of the army and the Druids by a duel between the two brothers; in the midst of which Cornuena, intervening to save Brennus from certain death, is accidentally pierced to the heart by the sword of her elder son.

“ AND other kings these hills have bred  
From cradle to wood-foray led.  
Why tell of Brennus, child of fame,  
Or proud Belinus”<sup>1</sup> greater name?  
Mulmutius was their mighty sire,  
Skilled in the wiles of border fray,  
And more imbued with battle’s fire  
Than all his race since Brutus’ day.

<sup>1</sup> Belinus, in addition to his martial exploits, built bridges and instituted a code of laws for Britain.

Nor in Dunmonium would he bide,  
But, from the night when Clotan died,  
Cornubia's sceptre in his hand,  
The north he scourged with western brand,  
And 'cross the Cheviots fought a way  
Till Caledonia owned his sway,  
And all our isle his wooded throne.  
Aye me, it was a glorious day,  
Nor such a field had Britain known.  
Rudac, Kambrensis, Pinnor, King  
Of Logria—all the embattled host  
Bernician Ywen from his coast  
With Alban Staterus durst bring,  
Melt like the icedrift with the spring !  
What 'vailed the battle-craft they knew?  
What recked the sword or bow of yew?  
Prince after prince Mulmutius slew,  
And chroniclers to-day revere  
The warrior king without a peer.

Now when a waning hunter's moon  
Shone on October's faded noon,  
And with red blush of autumn sere  
The old chief deemed his night was near,  
As to his couch Belinus hove  
To listen to his dying hest,  
His brawny palm Mulmutius pressed  
With all a father's love.

But, e'en in death, he did espy  
The jealousy in Brennus' eye,  
And with love's eloquence he strove  
If his last breath perchance might stay  
The long-hid fires that slumbering lay.

'Vex not, my sons, your father's soul,  
But drink with me a loving bowl  
That clan-feud is a deadly sin.  
Woe rue the cruel war of kin,  
Unnatural strife with malice fraught—  
Such rivalry the furies love—  
Oh ! by the battles we have fought,  
By nether gods and gods above,  
Forbear to stain this pleasant land  
With brother's blood and rival band.

The lordship of the isle you rove  
A goodly heritage you have,  
But trophies rich high valour gave  
Dissension's breath had never won.  
So, Brennus bold, and thou, my son,  
Give me the word mine ear doth crave ;  
So shall new victories one by one  
O'ershadow all your sires have done  
And I rest quiet in my grave.'

Thus the old warrior's parting breath  
Even in the chilly dews of death  
Good counsel to his offspring gave.  
Alas ! before his grave was green,  
Disunion in the wood was seen,  
And where those princelings erst had played  
And sported in the open glade,  
Came they to battle for a crown.  
And, tho' no name the field hath known,  
'Twas a good fight, and well contest',  
As all the Druids long confessed ;  
Nor did the chiefs their cars recall  
'Till cooling shades of evenfall  
Saw warring Brennus reft of all

Save naked comeliness he bore  
To fastness of the covert hoar,

And dared the foemen to their worst,  
Hoping, perchance, the wood that nursed  
His early youth in sweet delight  
Might pity now the warrior's plight;  
Or the blithe brook of sparkling joy,  
Where he had waded when a boy,  
With current lucid-clear that ran,  
Would veil the footprints of the man  
And hide his going in the stream.  
For he was fairer than a dream  
Or slumber fantasies that bring  
Some image of the godlike mould  
In our first parents manifold;  
When Eden's glories blossomed sheen  
And all her gardens tender-green  
Laughed Father Time to merry scorn.

Beauty is power—so mortals sing—  
But what could beauty's queenship bring  
The fugitive, that morn a king?  
With the same sun unhorsed, forlorn,  
Swift as the thought itself he fled  
His throne, his clan, and her he wed—  
The livelong night rejoiced to rest  
In an old beech's riven breast,  
Around whose hollow trunk, they say,  
His keen pursuers baffled lay,  
Musing the early night the while  
In wonder how a stripling's guile  
Had tricked the graybeards long, forsooth,  
Reared up in woodcraft from their youth.

But they as lief might woo the moon  
As conjure each their Druid seers  
To baffle Brennus in his noon.

A hunter, mightier than his peers,  
The roebuck's track to his blue eye  
Was as the quarry others spy.  
Even from his birth-cot well he knew  
Where all the forest flowers grew,  
And, ere three lustres he had seen,  
Cross gorse-moor, valley, tor, and green,  
The distant marches he would wend  
Fearless of foe, without a friend  
To guide him to his travel's end.  
O happy boy, of noble mien,  
Bred up to love the wood-gods' throne !  
Then nature was thy gentle queen,  
And all her secrets as thine own.

And savage beasts, from covert flown,  
He'd follow on the winter wind,  
And leave his panting hounds behind ;  
Or, if occasion called, would swim  
The torrent or December flood  
That claimed the summer meadow's brim ;  
And every fastness of the wood  
Or sylvan mazes were to him  
As beaten tracks or open plain.

The wood-birds' note at times he'd feign  
To call them from their roost again,  
And wile the deer in twilight dim  
Or sultry noon to moss-beds trim  
Where purple heather fragrant grew,  
And his swift arrow silent flew.

Or, with a gesture grim or gay,  
He'd counterfeit like god or fay  
Whatever voice his ear had known—  
A potent secret shared with none  
Save his great father's widowed queen.

By this young Brennus' foemen drear,  
Suspectless of the hunter near,  
Where beech-nuts mellow strawed the green  
A pleasant forest-couch had found.  
There, in the starlight waning pale,  
Druid and warrior dozing drowned  
The ripe fatigues of war's assail,  
And slumber-led their dreamtide kept,  
And full content had still dreamed on  
Until the morrow's dawn-beam shone,  
And to the car the sun-god stepped  
To yoke his metalléd coursers rare.

Not yet had Night's dusk over-rule  
Suffered Aurora warm the air ;  
But from a nut-brown coppice cool  
A nightingale the silent wood  
Was filling with her music's flood ;  
The forest and the wakeful brook  
Her warble for the nymphs' mistook,  
And to the ear of faun and fay  
Some god's voice from the river bank  
Seemed speeding on the coming day,  
And Brennus from his shelter drank  
The rhythm of her richest lay.

But listen, woods ! and hearken, brook !  
Another note doth fill the lea ;  
Night's feathered minstrel hath forsook  
Her favourite grove of melody.



Look how woad-painted warriors rise,  
And graybeards face the starlit skies !  
' What wonder-note of night is this ?  
Some ghostly frolic or rude chaunt  
Of pixies from their secret haunt,  
Or jest of wingéd elf, I wis ;  
Nor let the proud-souled warrior vaunt,  
And woe to wight who's done amiss.'

So spoke a Druid, but his word  
His pale-faced mates no longer heard ;  
Above the grove again a cry  
Heavenlike, and yet of earthly mould,  
O'er startled pine-crests clear it rolled,  
And seemed to travel from the sky,  
And filled the trembling woods around.  
And then, on ears distraught with fear,  
Mulmutius' dead voice soundeth clear,  
Nor 'monished with uncertain sound—  
' My gallant stripling will you take,  
And doth a brother haste to slake  
His vengeance-thirst with brother's blood ?'  
Not so the powers above do will  
That guerdon Corin's royal brood ;  
For Brennus is our darling still,  
And we will shield his head from ill.'

Now pearly day-dews haste to wed  
The comely turf wood-warriors fled,  
And, light of heart, young Brennus trode  
The forest path and wood-clad hill  
'Till he had gained an ancient rill  
That by a subtle fastness flowed.

There long time deep-encaved he bode,  
Nursing his solitude until  
Belinus' wrath had passed its flood.  
The bramble-berry was his food,  
Mingled with herbs and river-cress  
Such as the tangled wilderness  
And fertile rivulet gladly press  
On nature's child who'd eager wooed  
The virgin forest's every rood.

But when November's early moon  
Did silver tinge nocturnal gloom  
And slowly print her beauty pale  
Upon the distant slumbering vale,  
His mother Cornuenna came—  
To save the honour of the name—  
By starlit ways, in midnight calm,  
Like mountain ewe to seek her lamb.

And when her darling she had found,  
And with joy-tears her sorrow drowned,  
Swift were her words of counsel kind  
Despair to banish from his mind—  
'Tho' conquering chieftains priests may bless,  
Flight hath its victories no less.  
Nor prisoned in thine holt, I weet,  
Need'st thou long tarry, Bren, my sweet;  
For all the clan wait thy return,  
And for thy safety Druids burn.  
Nor ask a mother's lips to tell  
The ghostly vision that befel  
Sage warriors 'neath a beechen-tree!  
Enough if thou'lt confide to me  
The orbit of thy beauty's star.

But yesternoon from near and far  
The Druids' ban<sup>1</sup> hath searched the land,  
And there is not a wight will mar  
Or 'gainst my Brennus lift a hand.

Under the shadow of an oak  
The aged Archdruid angry spoke,  
And all the host assembled dared  
To take a life high gods declared  
Thrice blessed with their lasting love.  
So thou with me at dawn remove  
Unto a grove of lindens fair,  
Where oft the roebuck's herd repair.  
There, from a forester, I've heard  
The morrow's morn Belinus bold  
Wood-council with his chiefs doth hold—  
Meantime sleep on till dawning day  
Us thro' the forest call away.'

How shall the minstrel's art unfold  
Age-hallowed scenes that never fade,  
And all that chanced within the glade  
Where gold-haired chieftains musing drew?—  
Forest tradition known to few,  
An elden tale 'tis ever new—

How, when the proud king's wrath anew  
A deaf ear turned to brother's rue,  
Nathless his wood-host, Druid-led,  
No hair would harm of Brennus' head—  
How single combat stained the green,  
With all afraid to intervene,  
Since while the more part did incline  
To Druid precepts, held divine,

<sup>1</sup> Against those who still wished to attack Brennus.

A remnant to Belinus gave  
And scorned their 'nointed to enslave.

Such partisans the king's right hand  
Could still command, though Druid-bann'd,  
And priesthood haught and kingship met  
With deeper hue the soil had wet,  
And our white island's mightiest king  
Her masters called to reckoning,  
Had not hoar wisdom cried—' Forbear,  
Lest a worse evil happen there.'  
And thus two hosts did watch the fray  
Which either loathed but feared gainsay.

And now a sad scene I must sing,  
That floods to tearless eyne would bring  
To melt some glacier's frosted snows  
Upon a polar field repose,  
Where winter keeps long holiday,  
And ice-breathed Boreas ever blows.

For there was one who viewed that fray  
Whose quivering heart recalled the day  
When first her bosom throbbed to feed  
Her twinling heirs to wood and mead.  
What issue of the fight could bring  
A solace to her suffering?  
Not hers a champion there to choose—  
Whoso may vanquish she must lose  
Her firstborn or the beauty-son  
Her travail from the gods had won.

For if she looked in Brennus' eyes,  
That shamed the radiance of the skies,  
The thought was present how she'd pressed  
Belinus to her yearning breast;

Or did the elder's face recall  
Her long-wept consort, loved of all,  
Too soon that face o'ershone with hate,  
And trembled she for Brennus' fate.  
Thus, as grim war-bards clamorous sung,  
A woman's plaint was heard of few,  
And, whilst one life in balance hung,  
A thousand deaths the mother knew.

But when young Brennus' strength did wane,  
And every warrior on the plain  
Saw in the king a second Cain,  
With many tears his comrades wept  
The woodland fast enforced he'd kept;  
But Cornuenna frenzied leapt,  
And bared her bosom to the foe  
To ease her darling of his woe.  
'Twas but a rush, and all was o'er.  
Say, did a wood-god guide the blade?  
A living streamlet's crimson gore  
Told matricide had stained the glade.

Is there a love like mother's love,  
So slow to chide, so swift to mourn?  
Affection's gift from heaven above,  
It lights the nursling from his morn  
And gilds the cot where all have lain.  
And who may tell her hours of pain,  
Or reck a mother's after-sigh  
For all her heir hath done amiss?  
Yet oft her lips disdain reply,  
And heart-griefs smother with a kiss.

The son will leave for a caress  
His parents to their wretchedness.

Ofttimes for Hymen maids forsake  
A father hasting to the tomb;  
And husbands to their garden take,  
Eager to cull a virgin bloom.  
But mothers only love the more  
When death long-feared is at the door.  
What though stark winter's snows do pour,  
Or ever 'cross the starry mere  
Fate's storm-winds breathe impending doom—  
Yet satellites retain their sphere—  
So, when life's perils dark did loom,  
Even as a planet in the blue,  
Circling its star of brighter hue,  
Joying no less her course to run,  
Did Cornuenna shield her son!

Oh, look where on the sward doth shine  
The love-beam in her glassy eyne,  
Mirrored upon devotion's lake!  
And, ere God's angels hymn the wake,  
Ye harpers say, who fill the skies  
With your celestial melodies—  
Say, for her own pure Abel's sake,  
Could Eve have given a nobler prize?—  
Eve, for her godlike shepherd son,  
Whose heaven-blessed altars heaped did rise  
With a sweet-smelling sacrifice?

What laurels hath Belinus won  
To glorify his mellowing years?  
The warrior 'neath high noontide's sun  
Must mingle his with Brennus' tears.  
But thou, great lady, peaceful rest;  
Our forest turf shall veil the breast  
That its own grave did beauteous make.

Sweet life for death thou didst forsake ;  
But Britain's glories live in thee,  
All-hallowed rich for time to be,  
Nor death may steal from thy cold brow  
The tribute we thy virtues owe.

For in the hour thou bledst to save  
Thy Brennus from a cruel grave,  
That self-same stream that crimsoned earth  
Redeemed the island of thy birth,  
And reconciliation o'er thy tomb  
Set seal upon disunion's doom.  
There, by the greenwood glade that watched  
The warriors' pride long even matched,  
Upon a tented linden's floor  
Eternal truce the brothers swore.

These were the princes aftertime  
Lauded beyond the dreams of rhyme ;  
The heart of Gaul they twain subdued,<sup>1</sup>  
And with blood-river deep imbrued  
The cumbered vales of vanquished Rome—  
Brennus,<sup>2</sup> as their own bards have told,  
Scarce pacified with patriot gold  
To wend his western journey home.

Whoso mistrusts my minstrelsy,  
Let Allia's stream 'twixt him and me  
Say whether I have sung a lie ;  
Or records search, then he shall see  
Cornubia's eld chronology<sup>3</sup>  
With Roman fasti<sup>4</sup> will agree."

<sup>1</sup> P. V. Ponticus Virunnius, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Brennus and his brother defeated the Romans on the banks of the Allia and held their city to ransom.

<sup>3</sup> Between the British Chronology and the Roman there is only about twenty years' difference. Boulase's *Antiq.*

<sup>4</sup> *I.e.*, Calendar.

## BOOK XI.

### LIVIUS AND LIVIA.

The following evening Carādoc resumes the story of his life, and tells Piranus and Wingela how one day, hunting the wild ox, he first met the legate Livius, who, with his daughter Livia, had just arrived from Rome to take up the government of the West.

The wonderful charms of Livia, who falls in love with Carādoc ; but notwithstanding her fascinations he marries his early love Cordelia, a Briton woman, who bears him two sons, Carence and Ival, and a daughter Leira. In the meantime Livia, who has since plighted herself to a Roman noble, becomes reconciled to the inevitable, and permits her servants Marcus and Sabina to visit Carādoc's clansmen and bring his children presents.

“ You queried how my years had sped—  
What wars I've seen, what peoples led—  
At seasons when wood-joys must yield  
To labours of the battle-field.  
But 'tis uncomely to my lay  
To praise me as the boaster may,  
Self-flattered with the pride that swells  
The hero of the tale he tells.  
Let chroniclers who wield the pen  
Belaud Cornubia's doughty men ;  
Be mine to sing the hunter's home,  
A love-tale trist of sovereign Rome,  
And how a damsel's slighted flame  
Disgraced a proud patrician name,  
And us did 'whelm and 'minish low ;  
For, ere I tell, good pilgrims, know  
All with a woman came our woe.



It chanced upon an autumn day—  
Before September's fading ray  
Softly did flood our copses lone  
With golden glories not their own—  
Long-fevered with the chase, I'd torn  
'Twixt brambled bosques a hunter's way,  
Where on my path the bracken lay  
Scarce faded yet, tho' summer-lorn,  
And the glad hound's note, zephyr-borne,  
Sweet music wafted o'er the corn.  
O bygone scene for ever dear,  
Thou mossy carpet seldom sere !  
Tell how Carādoc's blood did yearn  
To gain the beech-wood's eastern burn.  
We'd killed an auroch<sup>1</sup> in the mead,  
One of the old-famed western breed,  
That whilere roved our forests free,  
And, resting on the greensward lay  
Three wood-mates blithe, waiting for me  
To bid them strip the monster prey.

And other twain beside them stood,  
Advancing from the nether wood—  
Daughter and sire they seemed to me,  
Our new-come legate and his child ;  
For good old Roman courtesy  
Shone in his dark patrician eye,  
Once in a lifetime you might see  
Such dignity and high degree  
Linked to a manner sweet and mild ;  
And he was all he seemed to be,  
Or more, if godlike deeds outshine  
The aspect of a mien divine.

<sup>1</sup> The wild ox.

Firm seated on our Western throne  
Ruled he the governed as his own,  
And scorned the glittering pomp and pride  
That in a far dominion wide  
With borrowed Kingship love to ride,  
Deeming his safety pendent on  
The subjects' love his rule had won.  
Thus up the dingle by the sea,  
The first of Roman legates he  
To come unguarded from the shore  
And view Carādoc's native moor.

' Hail, forest-born !' the Roman said,  
' A royal victim you have laid.  
Nor Gallia's woods, I think, have known  
A tenant like the one you've thrown.'  
And then he strolled around the mead  
And stroked our dogs and asked their breed ;  
He but arrived from Cæsar's court  
As tho' he'd ever shared our sport,  
Or 'neath the beech-wood's shadow grown.  
A king of men the legate strode  
Unto our turf-clad hill-abode ;  
And, if his talk mile after mile  
Unlettered listeners did beguile,  
His daughter's silence piqued me more ;  
I who have lived to curse her smile  
Attest the spell her features wore—  
A spell whose witcheries untold  
Had sired men of sterner mould  
Than he who fled<sup>1</sup> once he had seen  
The blandishments of Egypt's Queen.

<sup>1</sup> Cæsar deserted Cleopatra, Antony succumbed to her, Augustus avoided her.

There was a magic in her eye,  
Whoever viewed would linger by ;  
And even the ear her speech did pain  
Still yearned to drink her words again.  
Those eyes were black—black as her soul,  
But what a soul within them shone !  
Unmoved they wrung a willing toll,  
And sweet revenge in silence stole  
From hearts rebellious to her charm  
That first had scorned its power to harm.

Her hair was of the raven's hue,  
Such ringlets God hath given to few,  
And well she knew to turn each tress  
And court a lover's first caress  
Each gala-day and festal hour,  
When love emboldened by success  
Would snatch a bloom from beauty's bower.  
Oft then her breasts, that firmly grew  
Of alabaster's chastest hue,  
And arms, unmatched for turn and form,  
It was her humour to adorn  
With finest gauzes rarely worn,  
And all the artist's cunning call  
To wile the swain she would enthrall.

The dark complexion of her cheek  
Its Roman lineage did bespeak,  
And in her mood there lurked the fire  
Of a patrician's careless ire ;  
But he who fondest watched that face  
No print of beauty there might trace,  
Where brilliant feature there was none,  
Tho' faultless yet seemed every one.

But chiefly in her mien was seen  
The air that made her mankind's queen.  
'Twas not the things she said or did,  
For oft she frowned, and sometimes chid,  
But for her sway had e'er relied  
On subtleties her looks implied.

Deceitful as an April day,  
Her smiles were changeful as its ray,  
And of her height and figure too  
Ever had raged opinions two;  
For they were fashioned, to be true,  
More like the fairy's tricky form  
Than goddess-born to wing the storm.  
Mysterious thus before our eyes  
She stood a sorceress in disguise,  
Already weaving threads of gold  
To bind the Britons young and old,  
And rule us all with fairy wand  
As potent as her father's brand.  
But five moons after came there one  
Who'd travelled whence the Eastern sun  
Climbs daily from an azure main  
More tranquil than our seas, I trow.  
His was a beard of whitest snow,  
And his frail body racked with pain,  
Foot-weary borne with toils enow;  
For he had traversed many a plain,  
And measured many a mountain-brow.

A visitor from distant clime,  
Told he of dark Italian crime,  
And Alban Hill he'd heirless left  
Of two bright grandsons late bereft.

And then with bitter tears he sighed,  
That trickled to his palsied side ;  
How fury-driven from his home .  
He'd fled the walls of hated Rome ;  
How he had wandered every land  
Right unto Gallia's northern strand,  
Whence pitying mariners him bore  
In a tin-galley to our shore.

But when he'd heard our legate's name,  
And hearkened to his daughter's fame,  
With sailor's prattle looks belied.  
'Avast, ye fools,' the traveller cried,  
'Long time Rome's gallants strove in vain  
Her hand in wedded bliss to gain.  
Heart-free she boasted of a score  
Whose suicide lay at her door ;  
And, what the many marvelled more,  
Of all her madding charms enthralled  
None on her head had evil willed,  
But silent gone to welcome death,  
And loved her with their latest breath.  
For thee, Carādoc, most I fear,  
For sons unborn an early bier.  
So thou, great Briton, have a care ;  
'Gainst Circe's toils thy decks prepare.  
For by your Druids Kings revere,  
The devil's spawn you harbour here.'  
Thus, by our forest's fenny mere,  
The would-be mariner assails  
The clear fame of our lady dear ;  
But we did mock his frenzied tear,  
And deemed his warnings idle tales  
Hatched in a mad-brain's vision sere.

But I have lived to curse the day  
My laughter mocked the stranger's say.  
Let him who listens ponder well,  
All is not folly fools do tell;  
At times the madman's fitful flame  
Might wisdom's cunning set to shame,  
Or his rude warnings stifle mirth,  
Had not the lips that gave them birth  
Deprived the speaker of their worth.  
O ! had I known, in that same hour,  
What darksome fates undreamed did lower,  
Or heeded there, beside the wave,  
The warning kind the stranger gave ;  
Not as I weep each vanished scene  
Nor, as I live, alone and sad  
My latter day perchance had been :  
But other forms had made me glad,  
And other voices soothed mine age,  
To see an ancient heritage  
Fresh glories in its wane derive  
From sons who in their goings strive  
To keep ancestral deeds alive.

Yet I would not, and full have paid  
With blood the call my heart obeyed.  
But now before me trembling stood  
In all the pride of womanhood  
The fairest of her southern race  
That ever smiled on Briton face.  
Yes, she who freakful held to scorn  
The noblest of the Roman-born,  
Daughter of Old Italia's Kings,  
Love-fealty to Cornubia brings,  
And at my feet imploring made  
The offering of the dowered maid.

But what are wealth and place unto  
The passion of the love we woo?  
As thou dost love go choose thy mate.  
We are not masters of our fate,  
And ill the true heart e'er must feign  
Affection's semblance eyes may wear.  
What tho' the charmer ne'er so fair?  
What tho' her burning kisses rain?  
'Tis a cold flood thou'lt willing shun  
If memory but recall the one—  
The only one—thou lovest well.  
Our early love no fates may move,  
Nor may the love-lorn quite dispel  
The yearning for one form they love  
And treasure for some fancied spell,  
Which ofttimes they alone can see.  
And thus bechanced it unto me;  
For I had loved Cordelia long,  
And hoped to wed a forest-bride,  
When she would come to dwell among  
The clan with whom her fathers died.

But why recall the scents of May  
That breathed upon our marriage-day  
And perfumed budding grove and lea?  
What profit now to sing of mirth,  
Those peerless days of jewelled worth  
And paradise again on earth,  
The sweets of bright festivity,  
And joys that long have ceased to be?  
Radiant with grace Cordelia shone,  
And oh, the change since she has gone!  
But in my dreams I see her now,  
The primrose garland on her brow—

All robed in white, and then she stood  
'Twixt either clan within the wood.

And in my dreams I'd dwell upon  
The love-beam in her glance that shone  
Submissive true, unborn of fear,  
But dim regret, and scarce a tear,  
Whilst on her face unbidden came  
The love-light of the virgin flame  
Fair innocence's hope bestowed,  
Gemmed with the smile her dimples owed,  
As tho' a blush of morning's ray  
Had dawned to charm the tear away.

And, when the father's hallowed word  
Had given me my forest-bird,  
How both our clans, o'erjoyed, beheld,  
And high-according hands upheld.  
Their gladsome wood-cries in my ear  
A nation's ransom seemed to bear :  
They told delight none dared express ;  
The patriot flame Carādoc fanned,  
Who'd scorned a Roman dame's caress  
To wed a daughter of the land !

The variant seasons circling sped,  
And Heaven smiled on such a bed.  
Three pledges of our native love  
With baby-step had learned to run  
And sport around the forest's door  
In full midsummer's brightest sun.  
And oft, with parent pride, I pore  
And muse on vanished troubles o'er,  
And bless the God of Heaven above.



First Carence came with early spring  
That followed on our marriage-day,  
A face and form that poets sing—  
For he was lovely as the day  
Ere yet hath beamed high noon-tide's ray,  
And bathed in flood of golden hue  
The warm June sunlight loves to play  
And softly shine with new-born strength  
Beneath its canopy of blue.  
Nor coursed I then the forest's length,  
Nor to the council-chamber drew,  
Nor sought the wolf or mountain-roe  
In fastness of the hilly wild,  
But every toil of state forego  
And hunter's joys forsook awhile  
To watch Cordelia's mother-smile  
And linger by our first-born child.

And oft, when, veiled her milk-white breast,  
The mother craveth noontide rest,  
Hovering around our rude-built nest,  
Where purled the river to the deep,  
Like hedge-bird on the hawthorn-tree,  
Chanting some cradle-melody,  
I sung the little one to sleep.

And, after Carence, Leira came.  
We thought her face recalled to mind  
Great Guendoline's immortal name,  
To all her subjects ever kind,  
But with the same majestic mien  
Blue warriors had rejoicing seen  
As others of her blood had been.

And oft she gave the lads commands,  
With Boadicea in her look,  
And bade them run the yellow sands  
Or called them to her 'cross the brook.

But Ival was my youngest born,  
Pale as the star of early morn.  
That flees the glistening dew of day.  
Upon his neck his lovelocks lay  
Like gorse-flowers in their April bloom—  
His nature was not to obey  
Or heed the words his elders say,  
And in his mind but little room  
To follow aught but fancy's play.

With kingly carriage on he bears,  
And in his eye a mental fire  
That rival chieftains must admire  
And anger ever in his tears—  
And I had hoped, with father's fears,  
Discretion might grow with the man,  
And native wit beyond his years  
Would guide the counsels of his clan.  
O harvestide of marriage-joy,  
Departed days' undying gleam,  
How near, tho' distant, now you seem !  
Then every thought was of my boy,  
And life one long noon-dream !

He was the darling of my soul ;  
What though his mood brooked not control !  
The winsome smile I lived to seek  
His mother's lovelight seemed to speak.  
Hers was the outline of his cheek,  
And dimples twain that nestled sleek,

Till, with each frolic of his mouth,  
They oped like sunlight from the south.  
Hers was the contour of each limb  
That graced his lithesome figure slim;  
They were as one in mind and mould  
But for his forward spirit bold.

Yes, those were cloudless moons for all,  
But phantoms now beyond recall;  
And Livia, now herself betrothed,  
Joyed in the union she had loathed,  
And smiled upon its promise fair,  
As if our weal her own had been  
And not the food of her despair.  
For she had plighted faith with one  
Who long in other climes had sighed,  
And followed on the westering sun  
To lead the Roman girl his bride.

And thereupon her servants twain  
Oft to our bower would repair—  
Sabina first, to whom the care  
Of cookery did appertain;  
Unrivalled skill was hers to dress  
And diet kings with savoury mess;  
But after-leisure brief and rare  
With her proud lady she did share—  
First intimate of all her train.

Moons three came Sabine, and again  
A fellow-rambler willing led.  
A page-lad he, full bright of eye,  
Wedded to southern minstrelsy—  
Mark Antonine, and captive-bred;  
Such birth-name to a Moorish slave  
His jesting lord wine-heated gave.

Soon as their morning hail bespoke  
These Southrons twain to wit awoke  
And gossip with our forest folk—  
What chieftains to the legate hied,  
What gifts his own free hand supplied,  
And other chatter fresh from court—  
Or with our clansmaids merry sport,  
Hasting the spring-noon's tardy flight  
With varied pastimes blithe and light,  
Or, as sweet Ival's fancy willed,  
Sand-castles airy they would build  
O'ertopped with rock-spars' glitter mean  
Till billows' foam had swept them clean,  
When loud the floodtide surging sings  
Its triumph o'er the pebbled shore.

And one still eve Sabina brings  
A gift-cake to our copse-girt home;  
But Antonine his swart hand bore  
Some sugared citrons sent from Rome.

Then gold-haired Leira's childlike haste  
Eager besought her mother taste  
Of such unwonted fare,  
And thanked her guests with girlish grace,  
And royalty upon her face,  
Sweetened with condescension rare.  
And Ival on the strand I spy  
Peering with a curious eye,  
Carence also, loath to leave—  
Cates they never may receive.  
Long had been command of mine  
Sweets my lads must e'er decline,  
Under forest discipline;

For I gave them nought to eat  
But barleybread and game and meat,  
That they might grow up to be  
Hunters good as mine and me.

And many an eve our two friends came  
To take a gift of mountain game  
Back to their dear-loved lady's hands ;  
But, ere they wend their moorland way,  
Constrained would linger by the bay,  
In a fair meadow near the sea,  
Beyond the wandering billows' play,  
And please us all with melody  
And dance and pipe and roundelay.

And sometimes Marcus on the green  
Surrounded by the clan was seen,  
As with a flowing tongue he told  
Of warrior deeds and heroes bold,  
Or tuned to song the gay guitar  
With which good Moors had marched to war ;  
For he could sing and hymn each deed  
That won his dying fathers' meed.  
And, piping sweet, the past recall,  
While Sabine struck his atabal.  
Such subtle witchment in his voice  
Entreatful bade the woods rejoice  
When summer seas did whisper low.  
War-dukes he sung, and lady's love,  
And how the desert-born did rove  
The wilds of Afric's tawny brow.  
And when his blithesome note did fill  
The bosom of our beech-clad hill,  
Then sorrow fled Cornubia's shore  
And hope smiled brighter than before.

O ! minstrelsy, thine honeyed power  
Can cheer the captive's darkest hour  
And oversway the tyrant's rod !  
Sweetest consoler, sent from God,  
How oft thy music's mellow wave  
Hath spurred the spirit of the slave  
And braced the heart already free !  
So may the breath of melody  
Awaken yet this slumbering strand,  
And Heaven free our Briton land !"

## BOOK XII.

### THE GHOST OF CORDELIA.

The unbroken happiness of Carādoc's married life is rudely disturbed by the sudden and early death of his only daughter, which is followed by the serious illness of her mother Cordelia, who, however, apparently recovers under the skilful treatment of Livia.

But shortly afterwards Carādoc, returning home late at night from the legate's council, sees at the crossways on the moor the ghost of Cordelia, who had unexpectedly died in his absence. The great grief of Carādoc and his undying affection for his wife's memory.

“ FAIR was the glade in mid June's bloom,  
Full many a perfume filled the air,  
The lark rose mirthful from the broom,  
And leverets sought a sunny lair.  
And, to the meadow, from the wood,  
The pheasant led her halting brood,  
Where Hyacinth his carpet made,  
And briar roses blossomed free,  
And the cool moss-bank's ivied shade  
Invites to slumber on the lea.  
And, with the waning of the day,  
When eve had cooled the woodland rill  
And wrapped the moor in holy still,  
'Twas sweet to linger on the hill,  
Till, soothed to sleep in sunset's ray,  
Each wave forgot to sport and play,  
And nature's charm enchantment threw  
On every blossom summer knew.

But sweeter if Cordelia's cheek,  
Responsive to my sigh did seek  
Love's pillow on my throbbing breast,  
That yearned with passion's soft unrest,  
Fanned with the scents the west wind blew,  
Our wedded vow to breathe anew.  
Then if perchance the breezes bold  
Made frolic with her locks of gold,  
Or her bright ringlets on my brow  
Their glory-halo softly throw,  
Weaving a love-knot with her hair,  
In girlish sport she'd bind me there,  
And say 'no winds that sweep the wold,  
Nor icy blast of winter cold,  
Nor faery elf shall loose, I wean,  
Thee prisoned in my tresses sheen.'

But soon our joyance waned apace,  
And sorrow sat on every face  
With deeper shadow day by day—  
Our garden's treasured myrtle-gem  
Was withering on its fragile stem  
To premature decay!  
Unknown disease its snare-net spun,  
And, ere the morrow's night had run,  
Sick unto death our darling lay,  
And drooping sank without a sigh,  
Before her lips could breathe good-bye,  
So rapid was her last decline.

A winter floweret she had come  
When icy-pearled the moorland lay,  
And frosted clear our wattled home  
Beneath the heavens' starlit dome  
All-jewelled shone in night's moon-ray,



As if the stars had chosen the hour  
To smile upon our lowly bower,  
Or earth's white bosom yearned to greet  
The new-born snowdrop at her feet.

Nine winters only 'twas her lot  
To cheer the palace and the cot,  
Cornubia's light—a diadem,  
Enwrought with joy's celestial gem,  
To gladden Corin's native throne  
The few brief seasons she had known.  
Or, as a glow-worm's flash of gold,  
That lights the traveller on the wold,  
Not long her beacon-light doth give  
Where heather-bees benighted hive,  
So, for the nonce, a guiding light  
Shone clearly in her welcome bright  
At evetide, by the beechwood's burn,  
To greet the forester's return.

Those eyes that sparkled all they felt  
Oft for her clansmen's grief would melt,  
But, if a brother's chastisement  
Disturbed the lakes of their content,  
Despite the sun-smile on her brow  
Like mountain-flood her tears would flow.

But winters nine were hers—and now,  
White as her snow-capped native hills  
Ere springtide's sluices flood the rills,  
Even as a snowdrop pure she lay.  
And on her face the sun-smile's ray  
Shone full in death so sweetly yet,  
We watched it cheat the closing day  
Almost persuaded to forget  
Her prisoned soul had flown away.

And hour on hour the mother's eye  
Gleamed with a clearer radiancy,  
So beautiful it seemed to me,  
As tho' her spirit grieved alone  
And constant prayed at Heaven's throne  
To join the little one who'd gone.

For all that morn she fain would roam  
The gorse-crowned steep or valley-nook  
To watch the blue waves tipped with foam,  
Or gaze in silence on the brook  
That purled its summer madrigal  
Betwixt our cowslip meads.  
Not distant from that waterfall  
There is a copse-fringed path that leads  
Unto the neither cliffside way.  
There, until eve her kirtle spread,  
Cordelia silent mourned the dead;  
And ever and anon she pressed  
Her trembling fingers to her breast;  
And by the brookside kneeled to pray  
That God would haste that bitter day  
Or seraphs grant a mother's prayer.

But with the morn her strength had fled,  
And faint upon our rush-strewn bed  
The day-star of my life's noon lay.  
Alas! my pearl, bride of the May,  
How shall I sing thy parting day,  
Or after-dirge of thee I wed?  
No strength to hearken or to pray,  
It was so sad to see each streak  
Of pallor deepen on her cheek,  
Nor known what plague-fiend dared deface  
The glory-beam upon her face—

All life-tint from her features fled  
That ashen hue, 'twas of the dead.  
It was not grief, as leeches thought,  
The harbinger of coming doom,  
For grief unaided ne'er had wrought  
Such speedful wreck to beauty-bloom.  
Some plague, we deemed of Eastern name,  
That went as secret as it came,  
The eerie messenger of fate  
Upon its own breath ever borne,  
Haunting the dwellings of the great  
Before it claimed the lowly born.

Another eve, and Livia stood  
Beside a hazel in the mead  
Death's clemency herself to plead  
Without the forest's southern door—  
So had our war-queens come of yore  
Regardful of their subjects' need  
When sickness swept this wooded shore—  
It was as if a seraph friend  
Had come to bless my darling's end,  
My silver-feathered forest-dove  
That wounded yearned to soar above.  
She seemed so past the help of wight  
The richest dish could not invite  
Or tempt her waning appetite,  
Till Livia's smile arch-pleading pressed  
Such delicacies as Sabine dressed,  
Washed with some cordial's potent flow  
Had oft relieved a sufferer's woe.

And soon Cordelia's strength revives  
To glad anew our darkened lives,

And with God-given strength she pressed  
The jewelled fingers of her guest  
Whose parting, cross the cowslip mead,  
Our joyant clansmen ran to speed;  
And graybeards wept for joy to see  
The sun of western liberty  
Reflected in a ruler's eyne.  
So other suns will set that shine  
And undeluded chieftains mourn  
Dusk tyranny that knows no bourn !

Sweet Liberty ! for thee I wait,  
And long have tarried at thy gate,  
Biding thy watchman's morning cry.  
And, if I sought thee at the fall  
Of even, till the stag's last call  
Resounded in thy forest-hall,  
As stars that twinkle for a while  
So was the glimmer of thy smile.  
For when thou smil'st, 'twas not for long,  
And dirge had drowned our nuptial song,  
Or the fair beauty of thy face  
An enemy hath traitorous worn.  
Oh ! is there of our blood unborn,  
Or babe undreamed who shall replace  
This emerald from thy casket torn ?

Land of my fathers who were free,  
Their groves and breas were vowed to thee,  
Divinest daughter Liberty.  
Thy birthdom claims this fruitful sod,  
These woods have blessed thy gentle nod,  
On yonder hills thy cradle lay ;

But I have never known the sway  
Wood-freedom to this island gave,  
And soon must wend my nether way,  
And watch from my lone forest-grave  
The race I would have died to save !

Enough of dreams that mock the wight,  
Fast-chained in slavery's gruesome night—  
Meandering griefs but little 'vail  
To ope the windings of my tale.  
When morn's first streak with purple cleft  
The vault yet lit with starry ray,  
The wolf-skin couch betimes I left  
Tho' love thrice whispered, ' stay.'  
It was good Livius' council-day,  
And he who would Rome's favour win  
Ne'er dallies by his native linn,  
For Cæsar's hest brooks not delay.

The afternoon full dreary grew  
With parley, talk, and interview,  
In wood-convention and at court,  
Where chieftains from afar resort  
Obedient to the legate's call,  
And hark to rules he frames for all.  
A prisoner I, till dusk-browed night  
Her curtain cast on waning light,  
And starlight's tardy coming ray  
Bespoke the full-departed day,  
Tho' summer twilight lingered yet,  
Scarce veiling with her shadow-net  
Oak-copses interspersed with moor  
The wild deer loves to wander o'er.

Now had I gained an icy rill  
That oozeth from the western hill,  
And, 'neath September's richest sky,  
Forsakes its rock-spar canopy  
To flow twixt many a heather spray,  
And wanton on its babbling way  
With threadlets weft of silken floss,  
Dangling from some covert's moss—  
The northern<sup>1</sup> wood-bird's winter cell.  
And, fluttering from a bosque-clad dell,  
Benighted moor-moths wing the gloom,  
Where bees had drained the heather's bloom,  
And the last partridge calls to rest  
Her absent mate on evetide quest,  
As from the open to the grove  
The day-blind mouse-birds<sup>2</sup> whirring rove,  
And all night-nature seemed to move  
Or rustle in the misty air.  
But there was not on that wild spot  
One wooded bower or hunter's cot,  
Or ruined turf-hut left to tell  
What dreadful fate some herd befell—  
Save for the stars that welcome shone  
Trod I the moorland all alone.

Yet not alone—where man is not  
God's presence fills the desert place.  
The mazes of the forest-chase,  
The caverned dome, the secret grot,  
The ancient fastness long forgot,  
And cool glen wrapped with lichen sod,  
Where hermit's foot hath never trod,  
Reflect the glories of our God.

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, the woodcock.

<sup>2</sup> Bats.

His are the tracts whose heats deny  
Existence 'neath a torrid sky.  
The white-born ice-field ever chaste,  
And solitudes of every zone  
Are but the steps that point His throne.  
Above the sea-cave never known  
He smiles upon the wold ungraced  
And prints His beauties on the waste.

Shrill then I heard the curlew's cry  
Resounding pierce the star-bright sky,  
As wheeled they to the upland glen  
Whence echo brought their note again.  
Then, 'thwart my path, the heath-king takes  
His royal road to sylvan brakes.  
Three milk-white does beside him creep  
Whose tender eyes of hazel deep  
Were liquid soft as summer dew.  
Still fearless browsed they as they drew,  
And slowly climbed the fern-clad steep,  
Where, sun-bathed erst, the moor-path showed  
The wandering hunter's moss-grown road.

Why pause I breathless on the wild,  
Where I had lingered as a child,  
Beside the crossways, nurses said,  
The parting wraith would silent tread,  
Whose spirit soon should join the dead?  
Why breaks the chill sweat on my brow,  
As with misgiving voice I throw  
My larum to the vale below?

That other form so eerie white  
That meets my soon benighted sight,

Nor follows with the antlered band—  
Nor beast nor living man I trow,  
But wreathed in mist a phantom hand,  
Whilst silver-clear her accents flow,  
And there was love-light in her eye  
That seemed to banish coming woe.

‘ Come to me, husband, ere I die,  
To realms unknown perforce I flee,  
But all day long have yearned for thee;  
The only boon I crave is this,  
The soft imprint of thy last kiss.  
Mine orphaned lads, once more good-bye.  
Thou’rt absent, husband, and I die.’  
So came Cordelia to my eye,  
In fresh-won immortality.  
I saw her weep, I heard her sigh,  
But still could only hover nigh;  
First fear-compelled, then love-distraught,  
I trembled like a thing of naught,  
Then tottering on would muse again :

‘ Art thou image of the brain,  
Angel from the mystic train,  
Or delight of summer-dream,  
When the wood is gayest seen,  
And the yearning heart would know  
Vanished joys of long ago?’

It is my love—for now night’s queen  
Rising o’er the wood is seen;  
And her full-orbed visage bright,  
Dwarfing every star of light,  
Swift as thought hath turned to flight



The doubtings of my troubled mind—  
Not her I hasted home to find  
Upon the sick-bed where yet lay  
The faded bloom of yesterday,  
That mocked the spell of beauty's sway ;

But as whilere in girlhood's charm  
The fearless bloom of virgin grace  
Shone tender on her wistful face  
Ere modesty had breathed alarm—  
Now beautiful as erst she stood  
In the full burst of moonlight's flood.  
Unbraided yet her tresses flown  
Played with the rustle of a gown  
Whiter than those of mortal hue.  
And, fearful, I aside had turned,  
Despite the love that in me burned ;  
But on her face the moon-ray threw  
Such lovely tinges of regret,  
As tho' her lingering spirit knew  
The mortal chords that bound me yet  
In harmony of love.

But ere I stood, where late had been  
That sylph-like form and angel mien,  
Swift as the dew-pearl quits the lay,  
She vanished in the silver ray,  
And left me there upon the green,  
To weep the vision I had seen ;  
For with her going I knew full well  
The parting of the lover's spell,  
Death's messenger had flown to tell.  
The orphaned home, the widowed bed,  
When every ray of hope hath fled :

Is it of manhood to forbear  
The tribute of affection's tear?  
The hours rolled on—with morning's red  
Another night had joined the dead—  
But on the spot whence she had flown  
Still wept I with my God alone !

O say not, ye of sterner mould,  
That reckon the body by its gold,  
And join the dance before 'tis cold,  
Say not 'tis vain, but curb the smile,  
And leave us with our dead awhile.  
Ours is a faith beyond the grave,  
That mocks the flow of Lethe's wave,  
And ours the tears whose fount would keep  
Remembrance of the loved who sleep.  
Are not the memories of some lives  
As quickened forms that live anew,  
When recollection's arbour hives  
The jewelled drops of sorrow's dew?  
'Tis true love's counterfeit would wet  
The drooping lid with false regret;  
Yet there are tears that bright distil  
Affection's ever sparkling rill,  
And they who faithful love, and best,  
A friend—not friendship lay to rest.

But hark ! a footstep on the heath,  
Where faded brackens bend beneath  
A boyish figure wending near ;  
God wot the tidings he may bear,  
But I could hie no farther on  
To tell the vision to my son.  
And when my Carence did descry  
The anguish in his father's eye

His footstep lingered on the wold,  
Nor yet for grief his tale he told.

Now, in the light of morning's ray,  
With 'wildered brow I haste away  
To linger by our marriage-bed  
And steal a last glimpse of the dead,  
Ere morning thro' the open door  
Shone brightest on the rush-strewn floor,  
As if to light with mocking beam  
The couch whereon my darling lay.

Alas ! what change upon that face,  
Where suffering left its final trace  
To mar the beauty that had been,  
But for the look bequeathed to me  
Of faith's undying vision free !  
For on her features ne'er so wan  
E'en now to view expectant shone  
A gleam of girlhood's virgin grace,  
That called me to a last embrace.

I took the cold white hand in mine,  
O'erlaid with death's untimely line,  
And round her neck mine arms did twine  
With old affection's fevered glow,  
And yet another mad caress  
Upon her silent lips would press  
Ere from the fateful room I go.

Those lips divine of western fame,  
That roses' crimson oft did shame,  
They were the same to me as when  
Their whisper breathed the lover's lay,  
And we had roamed the moor and fen,  
And seven moons seemed but a day.

They were the same, and e'er shall be,  
The few brief moons these eyes may see,  
And dearer far her clay to me  
Than untold jewels' crystal hues  
Kings from afar would haste to choose,  
Or priceless gems from eastern store  
That sparkle on the merchant's floor.  
Age hath not dimmed my early flame,  
Nor paled the lustre of a fire  
That burneth yet with youth's desire.  
Lover I loved, as after, when  
Her babies lisped their father's name,  
Husband and widowed, now as then,  
I love her still—'tis all the same !

O ! could I see my love again,  
And clasp her hand in mine awhile,  
Or in the mist-cloud catch her smile,  
Even as the sunlight after rain  
Doth glisten on the dew-pearled main,  
The rainbow's iris ne'er had worn  
Such radiance as the one I mourn—  
And my last days would sweetened be.  
But she will never come to me,  
Except in dreams that bitter seem,  
When morn dispelleth fancy's gleam.  
For visions of the dead are few,  
And I am here for weal or rue  
But little ere my journey ends :  
Then when Caradoc passes too,  
Say, will you weep for me, my friends?"

## BOOK XIII.

### THE SAILING OF LIVIUS.

Not long after the deaths of Leira and Cordelia the dead body of the young Roman noble, Livia's lover, is found in a wood on the banks of the Valuda, or Val (the modern Fal), the cause of his death remaining a complete mystery. Carādoc's hate for the Romans generally; but he eulogises the rule of Livius, who on the expiration of his term of office leaves for Rome. As he sails, the Britons crowd the shore of the harbour to wish him God-speed.

“ WE had not mourned our loved ones long  
With doleful chant of funeral song,  
And scarce the last sad dirge had died  
Adown cliff, crag, and mountainside,  
Ere from the legate's hall there came  
Upon the wing of busy Fame  
A tragic tale swift rumour bore  
With lightning breath from shore to shore.

There is a wood whose covert sheen  
O'ershades Valuda's placid stream,  
Bright as the promise of the day  
When God shall light this mortal sky  
And wipe the tear from every eye.  
And on its bed of mosses green,  
If sunlight in the glade be seen,  
Longwhile, I trow, the bard would dream  
And muse upon the glory-theme  
Of all our forest-land hath been.

And if thou com'st, O stranger, stay  
Until the parting of the day,  
For in the breeze thou'lt find a lay  
Soft as the wild bird's roundelay.  
The waves that lap that gentle strand  
Are of Italia's azurn hue;  
More beauteous than the vaulted blue  
They ripple o'er a golden sand  
Whose loveliness is known to few.  
So calm, so tranquil, and so clear,  
Like sparkling crystal of a mere,  
Or fairest springs of Helicon,  
The river floweth ever on.

Spot of the wood-gods, nature's seat,  
From thy cool marge the naiads' feet  
Oft break the surface of the wave  
That beauty's print would fondly lave.  
I know thee well, thou fruitful land  
Of verdant glades and waterfalls!  
Rich is the memory that recalls  
The bounty from thy generous hand.  
Before the gales have taken wing  
Into the lap of smiling spring  
Thy free-will tribute thou dost bring.  
The primrose in thy leafy hall  
Her virgin promise ne'er belies,  
And, where the forest's border lies,  
Roseland of eld Cornubians call.  
And other woods Carādoc knows,  
But when the briar's fragrance blows  
It is the sweetest of them all.

But who is he of lordly rank  
Stretched careless on the river bank?

His form is slight, his years but few,  
And togéd garb of foreign hue.  
What ails thee, gentle youth, ill-starred?  
Thy limbs, well-favoured, I do view,  
As to their beauty prime they grew,  
And woundless yet, nor blood hath marred  
The bosom of the grassy sward.

He lies upon an alien strand  
Far from his dear-loved southern land,  
But the blue waves that onward bore  
Might have outsparkled well the shore  
Where Tiber mingles with the brine.  
There is no light in his dark eyne,  
And his pale cheek the morning's breath  
Fanned softly in the dews of death.  
White as the snowdrift is the hand  
That seemed to wave a last command—  
Or had it beckoned to the sky  
In his last bitter agony?

We could not tell, the spirit fled  
But mocks the gazer on the dead.  
There was no sorrow in his air,  
Nor did his peaceful features wear  
Aught of the suicide's despair,  
Nor had he sought a river-grave,  
Else had he slept below the wave,  
He whom his Livia ne'er shall wed.

Much queried all his fate anent,  
And Livia weeping in her tent,  
Close where a woodland garden lent  
Fresh pleasance to the riverside.  
But 'mid the din 'twas not denied

The selfsame morn her voice did breathe  
The day his lover hand should wreathe  
Her forehead with the fairest spray  
That blossomed on the forest lay.

And there the gallant—so 'twas thought—  
Love's solitude had fondly sought,  
And passion fed in reverie  
On blissful hours so soon to be.  
But what befell, or how he died,  
'Twas not for mortals to decide ;  
Even as he lived so was his end  
A mystery to every friend,

A nine-days' wonder-theme until  
The shadow of a greater ill—  
A cloud undreamed of all concerned,  
And till its bursting undiscerned—  
Fell like a monster from the blue  
To awe the watching craven few  
Who ever bend to *present* fate,  
But stirred the many and the great  
With all the fires of Celtic hate—  
A flame undying, nature's brand  
To drive the Roman from our land.

Land of my fathers, who had trod  
In freedom's hour our verdant sod,  
Thine elden glories slumber now  
When strangers lord it o'er thy brow !  
I cannot cringe, I cannot bend  
My minstrelsy to Cæsar's friend,  
But rather far would tune my lay  
To vistas of another day ;



And ever borne on Memory's wing  
The tales of heroes I would sing,  
And 'neath our tented forest bring  
The spirits of my warrior sires  
To fan anew resistance' fires.

Wood-kings unkinged, 'neath yon blue sky  
Dear to the gods your ashes lie.  
Sweet is the patriot's hard-earned sleep  
Beneath the Dinas'<sup>1</sup> breeze-kissed steep,  
Tho' after-times unholy quest  
May rob the warrior of his rest,  
And impious hands unfamed deface  
The mightiest chieftain's resting-place.  
But, as I turn toward his urn,  
My thoughts within me madly burn,  
And I would call the dark-blue sea  
To purge this shore of tyranny.

Not that oppression's iron came  
With each new legate's hated name,  
For some were kind and some were wise,  
And some saw with a Briton's eyes,  
As Livius, whom the gods defend;  
But others pressed their very end  
Of bigotry, or vice, or gain,  
And, when we'd wept a parting friend,  
A tyrant's heel was felt again.

We are the victims of caprice—  
And alien rule is seldom peace—  
Nor could one ruler's mercy blind  
Our sense to wrongs of every kind  
His predecessors left behind.

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, Castle-an-Dinas.

And, had the Cæsars' sceptre been  
Mild as the sapling tender green  
That queens it o'er a treeless scene,  
He of our race, whose heart beats true,  
Must ever mourn the wood-thrall's rue,  
Where mound and barrow fresh recall  
Immortal death-beds tragical.

It cannot die, the magic spell  
Upon its western citadel;  
They cannot fade, those tales, unwrit,  
Of sylvan arms and forest wit;  
And, had tradition held her peace,  
The very trees had sung the lay,  
Fresh nurtured in the dewy cool  
As evening breezes die away.  
The later legates' lenity—  
Talk not of tempered sway to me  
Whilst I do mourn lost liberty.  
What ruler's art may wipe the stain  
Of serfdom from this Britain main?  
What recks the largess' glittering bait,  
With freedom flown beyond recall?—  
When tyranny hath leagued with fate  
The despot's favour is but gall.

Rod of the stranger woe befall!  
Time was our groves did ward the free,  
And we had known no sovereignty  
Save of the skies and western sea.  
O waves that ripple to the shore!  
O skies that sparkle morning's hoar!  
Say, do the distant clans relate  
Our woodland lore and parted great?

Or is it left for me alone  
To weep the joys I've never known?  
It is a people's fairest pride :  
The oak-grove facing either sea,  
The dancing wave and waters wide,  
The forest-glade for me.  
And warrior, stricken in thy bloom,  
Mourn not on high thine early doom !  
The wild flower blossoms still for thee.

And while the past I do untomb,  
Faith I will tune my ballad strain  
Unmindful of the clouds that loom.  
Curse you the stranger's southern brand—  
The future is unto his hand,  
Who durst redeem his native land.  
For, as the oak upon the plain  
In the full time of ripe old age  
No longer braves the tempest's rage  
But bows to Boreas' harsh decree,

Yet where his branches hoar have lain,  
All welter to the winter rain,  
Go search hereafter you shall see  
His seed a sapling forest-tree—  
As suns that set and stars that wane,  
Or as Jehovah's second fane,  
Shall Britain's glory come again :  
Altho' these eyes may never view  
A forest kingdom won anew.

And yet I loved the god-like man,  
A father to the struggling clan  
Who, in his country's last decline,  
Above his compeers bright did shine.

But now his gentle rule had run,  
And I must mourn the only one  
Whose lustrous, bright, unsullied fame  
Endeared to me a Roman name.  
Companion of my early years,  
And confidant of later fears,  
Whose sage advice had oft, I ween,  
As oil upon the waters been—  
Friend, father, brother, all in one;  
Now those I loved have long since gone,  
And I do weep to think upon  
The counsel sweet thy lips did lend.  
O, Livius, would I'd shared thine end !

Their ships are lying in the bay,<sup>1</sup>  
The mariners gaze on the deep,  
And thrice the anchor-hold would weigh  
But for the voice of them that weep.

They came the peoples to the shore,  
And still they came, and wept the more—  
The youth and maiden on the strand—  
To beg a blessing from his hand,  
The old man and the child to say  
They'd sped him on his ocean-way.  
And, as he tarried on the wave,  
A parting ring in love he gave,  
And bade Carādoc faithful keep  
The gem, until his last long sleep,  
When one its resting-place should make  
Within his urn for Livius' sake.

Their ships are sailing from the bay,  
The sails are set, the anchor's weighed,  
And, as we heard the legate's say,

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, Falmouth Bay.

We kneeled upon the shore and prayed  
A ripe old age and honoured grave  
For him beyond the western wave.

Their ships are now beyond the bay ;  
I saw them in the fading ray  
Of May's last sunset sail away.  
I saw them, 'neath an amber sky,  
Winging the breezes merrily—  
The last dear link that bound me to  
The memories of happier days.  
And in the twilight's misty haze,  
As evening breezes rustling grew,  
Something within me whispered too,  
And silent voiced the loss I felt,  
As if my very soul would melt  
For grief within me ; for I knew  
With those departing sails that shone  
The sunlight of my life had gone !”

## BOOK XIV.

### THE DESPAIR OF LIVIA.

The death of Livius, who is drowned on the voyage to Rome. Livia, who remains in Cornwall and is still madly in love with Carādoc, now makes a final effort to capture the King's affections and induce him to marry her. But Carādoc, though admiring her, is still inconsolable for the death of Cordelia his wife. He also feels his first duty is to her children and his countrymen the Britons, with whom he would lose influence—and therefore with the Romans also—if he married a Roman woman. Soon after this the new legate lands, and Livia marries him. He is a creature of the apostate emperor Julyan, and to please his master persecutes the Cornish Christians, among the last of whom to perish is Carence, the eldest son of Carādoc.

“ BUT Livius, on the moon-lit bay  
That sparkled kisses on his way,  
Will never view the hills of Rome  
That called him to his father's home  
O'er pathless seas, far from the isle  
So long had summered 'neath his smile.  
Alas ! good Livius, little we  
Had known how soon thy night should be.  
For he was drowned in stormy seas  
Before the Gates of Hercules  
Had opened to his faithful crew !

And yet, that eve his good ship true,  
Responsive to the waves' caress,  
Had cleft the watery wilderness  
More as a sea-bird skims the blue  
Than Britain's messenger of rue.

And gaily then the waves, I trow,  
Had parted 'fore her beakéd prow.  
Under the keel they silent slip  
To wipe the froth from ocean's lip ;  
Or swirling dive the deeps beneath  
To circle with a foam-bound wreath,  
And deck with many a passing flake  
The parting ripples in her wake  
That sparkle o'er an ocean-cave ;  
But there was treachery in the wave,  
And, of billows that had lain  
On the bosom of the main  
Smiling 'neath the pale moon-ray,  
None had smiled as false as they !

But that same moon—whose visage chaste  
Shone tranquil on the liquid waste,  
And silvered, with her guiding ray,  
The mariner's lone watery way—  
That same moon, on Cornubia's shore,  
Shone on a daughter weeping sore  
The father she shall see no more.

See where she walks near where the billows race,  
An earthly queen imbued with Heaven's grace,  
The warm sea-breezes, sporting with her hair,  
Have beautified a face already fair.  
I saw its heightened colour rise,  
Mistrustful mark the angry skies  
With greater beauty, for those eyes  
That gazed upon the moon-lit bay  
Were stars to cheat the heavens' ray.  
Some pallor on her cheek, 'twas true,  
But beauty in its transient hue,

As one by one the tear-drops clear,  
That 'neath her eyelids fast appear,  
For number and their price indeed  
Might well have slakéd sorrow's greed,  
Like to the diver's who has found  
Rich treasure in his pearling-ground.  
And so in all her misery,  
E'en as the rose doth hide the thorn,  
Her sweet face seemed no less to me  
A dream of melodies unborn.

We whispered of departed days  
A people's love, the Britons' praise  
Of all the legate's homely ways;  
The acts uncalled and lesser things,  
And each remembrance sorrow brings  
To those who thoughtless cull the boon  
Of fortune's favours till the moon  
Of plenty waneth, when, too soon,  
They find a right long deemed their own  
Has with the benefactor flown.

' And is he gone for aye?' said she.  
' There is no danger, seemeth me,  
Like to the perils of the sea.  
How many a night have I alone  
Long listened to the tempest's moan  
Beat on Cornubia's rocky strand,  
And waked again to understand  
The treachery of Ocean's hand!  
As tho' I heard, above the storm,  
The sailors' death-shriek landward borne,  
And felt my heart within me quail,  
As fiercer blew the rising gale!



And, with that message from the sea,  
Cornubia's mariners to me  
Were children of my own country,  
And I had trembling prayed God keep  
Our western fishers on the deep.

And, whilst I prayed, loud would my sire  
Command them light the beacon fire,  
And rouse the soldiers from their sleep  
To pile fresh faggots on the heap.  
For 'twas a homely word of his  
"Rome knows no enemies  
In Britain," and "He is no friend  
Of Rome who will not lend  
A hand in stormy times to save  
The Briton from a watery grave."  
But now, Carâdoc, now, no more  
Is there to me the counsellor  
Whose voice was as a magic wand;  
And I am left, upon this shore,  
Unfriended in a foreign land.'

So murmured she, with many a sigh,  
That breathed its latent melody  
Of sadness on the evening air,  
And, on her bosom debonair,  
Her head bowed down with grief she laid,  
And wept until her dreamy eyes  
Were passion's earthly paradise,  
And shone upon her breasts below,  
Like diamonds on winter snow.  
And so it was, as I surveyed  
The blushes on her face that played,  
Willing to soothe, afraid to drown  
The false hope in her bosom grown,

Before *my* lips could say her nay  
*Hers* on my cheek reposing lay.

' Great lady, oh, forbear ! for me  
This summer day-dream's phantasy,  
Nor bid Carādoc faithless turn  
Within whose heart, as in an urn,  
The ashes of a dead love lie. '

' Am I not fair ? ' her lips replied.  
' How many take a second bride,  
Taught, by her virtues who hath gone,  
To trust in wedded life alone ?

I know it is not mine to bring,  
Or lay the April of my Spring  
Upon the altar of my love.  
I know thou stand'st a forest king  
True to the sapling tender green  
Thou weddest in the ashen grove.  
Yet I have heard it said of old,  
The wisest men an added grace  
In beauty's ripened charm have seen,  
The birch's silver turns to gold  
While yet the ash is green.

But look, Carādoc, on my face,  
And, if adversity's distress  
Hath marred its native loveliness,  
Yet call to mind my former grace,  
And let this tear-stained visage be  
The mirror of my soul to thee !  
Am I less beautiful than when  
You saw me coming up the glen—  
The day when first my father's crew  
Had viewed these western waters blue ?

And, ere he sailed this very eve,  
Did'st thou not promise to receive  
Me as a trust-gift from his hand,  
When he had left Cornubia land?  
Not that a thought within my mind  
Misdoubteth one no oath did bind,  
For there is honour in thy word,  
And thou art faithful as the sun,  
Or visit of the summer bird  
Whose yearly coming makes us fond;  
And what more can I ask of one  
Whose word is better than his bond?

Honour his faith, and faith will bring  
A new love's sweet awakening.  
Who hath not seen the forest flowers  
Bloom fragrant in their wonted bowers  
When springtide's breath hath kissed away  
The memory of winter's sway?

There is new vigour in the air  
When birds and trees their strength repair.  
Soon as the cuckoo's note doth call,  
The chestnut, freed from winter's bond,  
More prescient than his brothers all,  
First to the spring unfolds his frond.  
The throstle and the redbreast bold  
Who nest before a bud is old,  
'Tis not inconstancy that calls  
New lovers to their leafy halls.  
'Tis not neglect, but nature's law,  
Like unto like must ever draw.  
The beasts that roam, the birds that sing,  
Shall mate with each returning spring.

And, as the wood-rose moist with dew  
Smiles sweetly on the sun anew,  
So now, perchance, these later tears  
May vanish with forgotten fears,  
And, in the sunlight of thy glance,  
My life one long Elysian trance,  
Within the forest I would fain  
Be empress of thy wood-domain.  
Let me be near thee to allay  
The passing troubles of the day.  
There is no charm like true love's power  
To soothe the monarch's gloomy hour,  
And I have nought but thee to cheer  
The sojourn of my winter here.

There is a winter of the heart  
More deadly than the north wind's dart  
That pierceth, with his spear unseen,  
The bosom of the oak wood green.  
Surely, Carādoc, thou must know  
The frenzy of affection's woe :  
How many nights each hour did seem  
The recollection of a dream !  
How many days untold have gone,  
And still thou com'st to weep upon  
The graveside of thy former love !  
Doth not compassion in thee move  
One touch of pity, and allow  
That I have suffered more than thou?

My life has been a glen of tears,  
The unrequited love of years,  
And I have wandered like a thing  
Pierced with the dart of every sting—

A thing without the power to weep,  
A derelict upon the deep,  
Since first the day for love of thee  
Time launched my barque on sorrow's sea !  
Is there no haven for my woe?  
No safety-road, no peaceful bay?  
If thou wilt not, it must be so,  
But thrust me not, my love, away !'

Such was the passion art till then  
Had hidden from my baffled ken.  
Was it the faithful love of years  
Or newborn with the ready tears  
The false heart at its pleasure weeps?  
I know not, for the secret sleeps,  
And must for ever in the grave.  
A woman's heart will fearless brave  
The tortures of a thousand sins ;  
But who of mortals yet may say  
Where hatred ends or love begins?

Her words were pleasant, and her lay  
Well suited to the dying may  
That perfumed faint the evening air—  
Sad in their sweetness, for to me  
They breathed the accent of despair.  
And, had I linked my lot with her,  
'Twas in her power to confer  
On me and mine, for aye I deem,  
Riches beyond a miser's dream.  
But I had sworn and never would  
Revoke my life vow, if I could,  
Whilst all the counsel prudence gave  
Spoke to me from Cordelia's grave.

There is a sweetness in the thought  
Of love that cheats the hand of time,  
Its music still when we are nought  
Will echo with a sweeter chime.

O love so great as never then  
God planted in the heart of men,  
More hallowed with my life's decline,  
In death, Cordelia, I am thine !

Not that a father's love waxed cold,  
Or I less tender than of old  
To the sweet heirlings of our name.  
My love was fond, and fonder grew  
When every breath of spring that blew  
Told me that nature was the same.  
But had fate willed me then as now  
Heirless alone my days to end  
No less remained the silent vow  
My country's children to defend.

My native land, the hunter's home,  
An island, if the northern foam  
Of ocean dipped where Tamar's stream  
Flows by Pentillie's woodland-dream,  
The beauties of thy southern shore  
What could Italia give us more,  
When even Roman lips confess  
Thy blue waves' sparkling loveliness?

Land of a vanished glory's gleam,  
Altho' thy face must rugged seem,  
Thy granite is the poet's theme;  
And thou a child of nature's will  
The cup of memory to refill  
—With every field a hill,  
—And every hill its stream.

Land of the sunset, tempest-beat,  
With ocean's prizes at thy feet,  
And harbour, river, creek, and bay  
The hymn of Briton roundelay :  
How now, my country, could I see  
Our troth become inconstancy?  
For I had loved thy northern hills,  
And music of the forest rills  
That washed the bed of liberty,  
Where many an urn Brown Willy's lea  
Hid from the stranger's curious 'ee;  
So while I live life's latter day  
My Maker's summons to obey  
Heap, woodgods, heap with countless wreaths  
The barrows of my fathers free,  
But let me die a thousand deaths  
And never mingle with their clay  
If I prove false, dear land, to thee.

But Livia, flying from the grove  
That pitied her rejected love,  
Scarce might the clouded moonbeam veil  
The look determined, ghostly pale,  
Where bold defiance struggled now  
Defeat to banish from her brow,  
And love and hate alternate waned  
Till love the mastery had gained.  
That look—I thought upon it when  
The fires of Julyan lit the glen,  
And Julius, his vice-gerent here,  
Sent the first martyr to the stake,  
Making grim murder but appear  
A duty for his master's sake.

Oft we had secret eyed askance  
Our latest legate's cynic glance.  
The Cæsar's cupmate he had been  
Ere Julyan in the purple seen.  
Gifted, but indolent to sloth,  
Long after boyhood they were both  
To every plea of pity cold.  
On sacred topics of the day  
Indifferent, but in action bold  
When danger threatened, and, if they  
But thought their lives at hazard lay,  
In hate unbending they were one,  
Both fashioned from the granite stone,  
For self-protection not afraid  
In massacre to find their aid.

So Julius as his lord appears  
—He was a man whose riper years  
Belied the promise of his youth,—  
Bred up to love the Christians' God,  
And temper government with ruth,  
Soon he had roused the people's fears,  
Scarce waiting for the headsman's nod  
Before he gloated in their tears.

As Julyan, wiser than his peers,  
His name in all the schools appears  
First 'mong the pedants of the south.  
But bookman's learning in his mouth  
Was but a vile apostacy,  
A whited wall, to shame the truth  
He'd learned upon his mother's knee;  
For wit and learning only made  
Of him the greater renegade.



And yet, a monster though he stood,  
Still in his mind at times the good  
That fever in his blood would fan,  
As if the child defied the man,  
And, troubled by apostate fears,  
He'd haste to set the captive free,  
Persuaded by a woman's tears  
Unto a woman's clemency.  
Such was he then, so rumour bore  
Ere he had anchored by our shore.

He landed ere Midsummer's ray  
Had poured its splendour on the bay  
One late spring eve, and through the land,  
With torch and stake and flaming brand,  
That night the hill-fires blazoned clear  
A legate's safe arrival here;  
But old men, till the morning came,  
Told, by those beacons' friendly flame,  
Dread night-ales of the Roman name.

So when, enchained by love, he led  
The weeping Livia to his bed,  
And marriage-wreaths our wood-folk wove  
To deck their favourite in the grove,  
How many a hand was raised to bless  
The lady of the raven tress!  
How many an accent breathed a tear  
That mingled with a people's fear,  
To see so sweet a thing bestow  
Her beauty on a heart of snow!

But some did say, the snowdrift's belt  
Beneath a summer sun will melt,

Nor lives the avalanche to stay  
The sun that warms it every day.  
So, in their doting love, they said  
Of her own will the faithful maid,  
Obedient to her sire's command,  
Had tarried in Cornubia land,  
And loveless wed, that Beauty's smile  
Might ward the sword from Britain's isle.

How soon, alas, their hope waxed dim!—  
Hope never waneth till 'tis low—  
How soon their curses fell on him,  
Lord of our island's cruel woe.  
He ruled us with an iron rod,  
The Britons' cry went up to God,  
He spared not woman, man or child  
To heathendom unreconciled.  
The fires that lit an azure sky  
Mocked summer with the martyr's cry,  
And, while that summer's zenith shone,  
Relentless still those fires burned on.  
They smouldered till the tyrant's wrath  
Only required its aftermath  
To crown the harvest earlier won,  
When, rising from the forest path,  
Where all was still, and everyone  
Had thought the hideous orgy done,  
Fresh kindled shone the curséd flame,  
A higher victim now to claim."

## BOOK XV.

### THE PERSECUTION.

The lament of Carādoc on the death of Carence. Whilst he is still speaking the voice of Ival is heard coming up from the glen, where his nurse had hid him that morning on hearing of the soldiers' approach. The child then inquires for his brother, but before Carādoc can reply the soldiers, who have returned, snatch the boy away and drown him on the sands in the incoming tide, before his father's eyes.

The effect of this is almost to deprive Carādoc temporarily of his reason, and he disappears in the woods, where, seven days after, he stumbles on a wild boar, and flying from the animal through the forest falls into a Druid's cave.

“ The May morn's beam was passing fair,  
And radiant shone the spangled lea,  
The blue waves rippled merrily  
Against the cliffside stair.  
But there was sorrow in the air  
And, floating on the vernal breeze,  
The wail of Briton melodies,  
As pealed the chieftain's monody  
Its wood-note of despair.

‘ Say, hath he passed, ye tribesmen, say,  
The matchless form whose joy had been  
Godlike to me as noontide's ray?  
'Tis so, by your lament I ween  
Our island's sun hath set to-day !

Then weep with me, O daughters dear;  
From north to south, from sea to sea  
Bid every clansman's tribute tear  
To solace my poor royalty—

A royal song—am I a king  
To bid the untaught minstrel sing  
Such harmonies as court relief?  
Ye granite tors, ye oakwoods, no!  
No bardic song shall mock my grief—  
What melody may soothe our woe?  
But mourn with me, as each shall please,  
Under God's eye, upon the leas  
That fringe our forest's sacred grove.

—The forest grove—well he did love,  
Soon as blithe childhood bid him dare,  
Our beeches' tented aisles to rove,  
Among his mates without compare,  
And ever onward gaily bear,  
Chanting some sylvan harmony  
Or hunter's many winding air:  
But who will wander now with me  
And track the wolf-cub to her lair?

He's gone, the beautiful, the fair,  
And solace of a clan's despair.  
That form that roved our amber shore,  
Those lineaments I view no more,  
That glorious beauty that outshone  
All others he had gazed upon,  
Those Heaven-blue orbs that now diffuse  
Their halo of celestial hues,  
Those comely features, that brave face,  
—The after hope of all his race—

All now consumed with heathen fire;  
And I, who live, his stricken sire,  
With bygone dreams may not aspire  
To visions of a happier morn.  
O God ! who dwell'st above the spheres,  
God of the Christian, by these tears,  
Look kindly on the forest-born,  
And pitying view a father's woe.'

So prayed I with a sorrowing clan  
That gathered round me to a man,  
As, above the woodlands green  
'Twixt white clouds that come and go,  
The cheerful sungod's warning beam  
Shining westward clear was seen  
After-noon in all his mien,  
Whilst, upon the seas below,  
Golden glory from his brow  
'Lumed the tide's returning flow.

And all was tranquil on the hill,  
Save the throstle's trinal trill  
Making silence still more sweet  
With her heaven-note counterfeit.  
With the songstress' warble kind  
Came another on the wind,  
Leaving sorrow far behind,  
As the voice of hope doth call  
Cadence soft and musical.  
Love-balm priceless on it brought  
Gentle solace sore besought,  
Waking in my heart the thought :  
All's not lost on sorrow's sea  
Whilst my Ival's left to me.

He stood within his father's ken  
Fresh from his sport below the glen,  
And firm his baby fingers held  
Some treasure-trove the deeps did weld ;  
And in his cap he mirthful bore  
The latest spray the hedge-row wore ;  
But there was wonder in his eye  
A word unsaid, that craved reply,  
Such as the child sometimes will cast,  
And silent crave a boon unasked.

He stood beside his father's door,  
The fairest blossom on the shore ;  
And in his locks of grace untold  
The sunlight found another gold  
Bright as the gorse that gilds the wold.  
Gold-locks bright the winds beguiled,  
Dancing as his dimples smiled—  
There is God's comfort in the child  
Joying in his early spring  
If his countenance but bring  
Some remembrance from the dead  
Of the consort happy wed.

And if he smile, whom all his race  
Have fore-passed to their resting-place,  
Or on his brow a gleam that shone  
Recall his playmates dead and gone :  
Sweet is the reckoning that doth bring  
Fate's one redress—the precious thing  
To whom the past must ever cling.  
The spirit chafes, the heart must bleed,  
When joys long-cherished fast recede ;  
But all our visions are not fears  
If solace mingle with our tears.

' Why weeps my darling father so?  
What cause can be for grief or woe?  
The sun shines brightly on the day,  
A day for sport—let's to the bay.  
But tell me now, O father dear,  
Why comes not Carence to me here?  
When yesternight my cheek he pressed  
And I his flowing locks caressed,  
He promised with to-morrow's sun  
A race upon the sands to run.

And I have sought him long since noon,  
And sought him, so it seems, too soon.  
'Tis long since we have joined in race,  
For Carence now pursues the chase  
And gives but little thought to joys  
Or pastimes Ival still enjoys.

I long to try anew our speed,  
For he will give me length of lead  
And vantage-ground's conniving test  
Which for his years doth run the best.  
And soon the tide's returning race  
Will hide in foam the beach's face;  
The blue waves lapping o'er the strand,  
We may not course the yellow sand.  
Tell me, O tell me, father dear,  
Why comes not Carence to me here?'

Alas! what pretext might I feign  
To soothe the little one's unrest?  
When with that dawn black rumours came  
Of cohorts marching from the west  
And murder wafted on the gale,  
His trembling nurse sweet Ival took  
And sheltered in a forest-nook  
Till tyranny had swept the vale.

For she had loved him from the day  
When first he viewed the sunlight's ray,  
And when his mother's spirit fled  
From out the weeping clan had said—  
'Come, my lone bird from the nest,  
Lay thy head on Esdrilde's breast.  
Friends may come, and friends may go,  
But of all that greet my dove  
None may love as I must love  
Who can never say thee no.  
Come for shelter, come, my King,  
Nestle under Esdrilde's wing.'

But better far her babe had died  
Upon his natal day,  
Or I had never wed a bride  
With coming of the May ! \*  
Alas ! unwonted tears will well.  
What 'vails 'gainst memory to rebel?  
When now, as erst her pleasant flood  
Wafteth the evil with the good,  
And, like a sweet-linked golden chain,  
The past brings back to me again ;  
And I would live my woes anew  
To taste the former joys I knew.

But I will on—before my brain  
Some pretext fair or plea might feign.  
The ashen lintel smitten sore  
With hurried blows resounds amain,  
And he, who forced admittance sought,  
Rude entrance breaketh swift as thought—  
A dusky form—'twas Mark, the Moor.  
Then mantling blood my cheek suffused  
And anger blazed within mine eye.



' Not thus had other legates used  
Their menials to Carādoc send.  
On what pretence dost hither wend,  
Unbidden friend or traitor spy?  
Out on thee, Sirrah ! swift, reply !'

Freed from my grip the trembling Moor  
Rose breathless from the rushy floor,  
Vindictive shone on his swart face  
The passions of his southern race.  
' The message I was sent to tell,  
Briton, receive ; but know thou well  
Not me—my masters, you defy ;  
This eve your other boy must die.'  
With serpent hiss his accents flew,  
Resumed his cheeks their wonted hue ;  
But Ival's sob, alas ! too soon  
He'd learned his martyred brother's doom !  
And soldiers tramp upon the green  
Recalled the morning's murder scene.

I could not weep, I could not fly  
To soothe my baby's dying cry,  
For I was as of other mould ;  
Through palsied veins my blood ran cold,  
And oh ! the pain of grief untold,  
When speech declined its power to lend,  
Apt were the blow to court mine end.  
The seas seemed stars, yet starless shone  
As tho' all light of earth had fled,  
And left me living with the dead,  
Before my love had gone.  
Then nature broke her harsh duress,  
And one fond kiss with love's finesse  
Urged me upon his cheek to press.

But, ere a father's love essayed  
His darling's last caress to gain,  
Flashed in the sun the gleaming blade,  
And laid me writhing on the plain.  
I reeled beneath the savage blow,  
And my last hope perforce forgo,  
But follow where the soldiers lead  
With tottering gait and feebler speed.  
A spirit seemed to urge me on  
Silent to view my only son;  
And I, who rooted stood that morn  
When Carence from me they had torn,  
High God compelled to venture nigh,  
And watch my darling lval die.

It was the look upon his face  
That called to mind his mother's grace  
And bade me climb each sandy ledge  
To see the last of her last pledge,  
And willing share, if it might come,  
Her favourite nursling's martyrdom.  
But breathe till then the loathéd air  
In bitterness of mute despair.

By this, upon the fateful shore  
A pitying train all weeping sore,  
That whispering asked 'twixt every sigh  
The death by which my boy should die.  
And then, ere gloom of coming night,  
The varlets' secret crept to light.  
Ye gods ! I saw them bind his hands,  
And force him walk those shifting sands  
Where the floodtide's increasing flow  
Meant death to all thereon might go.

I saw despite his wild alarm  
The cords entwine each tender arm,  
And, tho' his sobbings rent the air,  
Each end pressed tight from each cliff-stair.  
I saw the billows onward beat  
And hide from view his tiny feet,  
And then another, white with haste,  
In sorrow wreathe his slender waist—  
Hark, the clansmaids' wake-refrain  
Stealeth o'er the weeping main !  
See, a people's kindred tear  
Trickles on his watery bier !  
Even the soldiers' iron breast  
Forced to yield with all the rest,  
And the seamew's greed forebore  
His frail corse to hover o'er.

My brain was fire—my reason bare,  
I longed to fly I knew not where ;  
For grateful teardrops now declined  
To keep the balance of my mind.  
One thought alone my fancy led  
To shun the living and the dead,  
And in some desert seek relief  
Where solitude might silence grief.

Yes, I was mad, nor deigned to see  
The kindly friends who beckoned me ;  
But 'neath the sunlight's amber wane  
In mad career I fled the plain,  
And satyrlike would dance the mound,  
Frenzy relieved my aching wound,  
And gave my limbs a demon's power  
To skim the bracken, weed, and flower,

And in my mind to chase the day,  
As forestward I winged the lay,  
A hundred furies seemed to say,  
'Carādoc, to the woods, away !'

Then fleet of foot as roe I ran  
To where the woodland's verge began,  
And ever on would breathless urge  
Far from the sweep of billows' surge ;  
And, when the thicket's shrub withstood  
The onset of my 'wilderer mood,  
The wolf-skin from my back I tore  
That thorns might scourge my body more.

At night I feigned the lion's roar—  
As travellers told from Afric's shore  
Where long becalmed their galley lay—  
And had it been in winter's day,  
Despite the mimic of my lay,  
The wolf had found his evening prey.  
But every morn the fevered sun  
Told June-tide's course had well begun,  
As fiercely shone the livelong day  
'Twixt forest peaks his cruel ray.  
And oft through copse and hazels green  
I crashed again with madman's spleen ;  
Or 'neath some coppice-awning broke,  
Where murmuring brooks my thirst awoke,  
And cool my limbs upon the wave,  
And my torn body madly lave ;  
Or doglike lap the running stream  
And wash each scar and angry seam.

'Neath scorching heats the days renew,  
Desire for meat I never knew—

A mercy they alone can tell  
Who with thirst's pangs feel hunger's hell  
And strange it was I had not died,  
For oft I mused on suicide.  
But in that madness still I kenned  
The precepts holy men had penned,  
Nor with the pagan would descend  
To give my God-given life its end—  
A better succour waits us here,  
And God may lay the ills we fear.

And then I prayed my Maker give  
A death to life I loathed to live,  
And kneeling on the grassy sward  
Crave pity for a lot so hard;  
And then my malady grew worse,  
And loud on foes I heap my curse,  
And load with infamy his<sup>1</sup> name  
Who gloried in my grief and shame,  
Till o'er the sward and moss-grown mound  
Frenzied I trail each bloodstained wound,  
And cuff my limbs with self-given blows,  
From my parched lips the white froth flows.

Unyielding yet my body gave  
Faint prospect of an early grave.  
An early grave—what grave could be?  
For who was there to bury me?  
The prey-bird's beak alone had ta'en  
The fragments of me that remain,  
Unless perchance he'd scorn to steal  
Off such a frame a sorry meal!

<sup>1</sup> The legate Julius.

Oh ! how I longed that I might feel  
One teardrop down my visage steal !  
Tho' lost, alas, too soon in blood,  
It might have curbed the Furies' mood  
And stilled the raging of my brain.

Then like a dream all memory fled,  
And with it sorrow for the dead.  
It was as tho' they lived again,  
And I foredoomed to hear their woe  
But never death-release might know.  
And ever and anon I heard  
The flutter of a forest-bird—  
A royal bird he seemed to me,  
One of a kingly origin ;  
Not such as hover o'er the whin,  
Or warble by a moorland linn,  
But in the forest e'er would be—

A feathered lord whose breadth of wing  
Might shadow all his mates that sing,  
And fill the woodland world with awe  
—If I might judge, who never saw.  
Only his note upon the wind  
For comfort sweet to mortal mind  
The nightingale had left behind—  
Such subtle music in his trill  
Like siren's breath it seemed to fill  
Mine ear with solace, and restrain  
The 'wildered eddying of my brain.

And then a thought within me spun—  
Like flosses floating in the sun  
Or gossamer it stealthy came—  
Since God forsakes thy race and name,

And angels to thine anguish blind,  
In thy last torture why not call  
The enemy of all his kind  
To soothe the monarch in his fall?  
I must have yielded to the blow,  
For with the nonce came greater woe,  
An ebon cloud of deeper black;  
And quickened memory took me back,  
As if the tempter joyed to see  
Fresh torment for my misery.

A week's full span, or may be more—  
I kept no count of moon or sun,  
For day and night to me were one,  
Or rather one engulfing gloom  
That held me in a living tomb  
With all the damned undone—  
A week's full span, or, who shall say,  
I trod upon a boar that lay  
Abasking in the morning ray.

And now was seen the wavering mood  
In many a child of Adam's brood—  
He, who woos death of God's high grace,  
The all-dread angel face to face  
Ofttimes will flee, if danger's head  
Have weaned him from his secret dread;  
Or, if but once oblivion bring  
Some respite from the blackest care,  
Then hope again will spread her wing  
In mockery of despair.  
And thus it fortun'd to me there,  
Silent, unseen, her spirit came,  
And kindled Heaven's vital flame,

And spared my life for better times  
To tell this tale of Roman crimes.

But I had fruitless run that morn,  
And savage fangs my limbs had torn  
Did not my hunter's skill devise  
A cheat to foil the boar's emprise.  
A moment scarce he checked his course,  
But crasheth on with added force,  
O'erhauls my flight with every bound,  
With his loud roar the woods resound.  
And now his hot breath on me played,  
And pierced my shriek the distant glade,  
And, as I thought, with thunder's roll  
The lightnings flashed from pole to pole,  
The Druid gods mine orbs enthrall,  
And Earth, the mother of us all,  
Opened her bosom to my call."



## BOOK XVI.

### THE VISION OF ST. MICHAEL.

The vision of Carādoc in the Druid's cave, where he becomes convalescent, with the discovery that the occupant is the converted Druid Carausius who had married him to his wife Cordelia in happier days.

The good points of the Druids—Their skill in medicine and reputed gift of prophecy—Their rule sometimes signalised by a love of justice and a moderating influence on the excesses of the kings—Their great knowledge of astronomy and mechanics and love of learning generally.

“ ANOTHER land, my spirit fled  
Seemed in communion with the dead.  
There, all along a star-paved strand,  
Myriads on myriads countless stand,  
And white-robed choirs the day prolong  
In melodies of ceaseless song ;  
Nor night may dim that glassy shore  
Where joyance reigneth evermore.

But all I saw I may not tell,  
Save that a seraph, chief of all  
His glorious compeers, who did fall  
Before a jewelled citadel,  
Passing in beauty all, I ween,  
Or seer or bard's conceit hath seen—  
To me the warden of my goal—  
With silvered accents loosed the spell  
That lay upon my trancéd soul.

' Far o'er the seas, where oceans roll,  
There is a steep, within a wood,  
Age hallowed dear, which Lucius'<sup>1</sup> brood  
Carreg luz en kuz<sup>2</sup> call.  
Crag-bound the rock, and many a wall  
Nature's hill-cunning doth devise  
To proudly front forbidding skies,  
And hurl the foeman to his fall.  
Druids' delight it long hath been,  
And its redoubt within the bay  
The fisher's beacon far away.  
There, where the western billows fret,  
And wandering breezes ever roam,  
On this hoar rock my seal I set,  
And it shall be my earthly home.'

He ceased his lay, Michael confessed  
In word and look, and for the rest,  
Ten thousand choirs of the blessed,  
From lips so pure a cheerful hymn  
In unison resoundeth clear.  
But I did tremble in my fear;  
A mist-cloud subtle seemed to dim  
The glories of that radiant sphere.

Paler and paler light did wane  
And black-winged night usurp her reign,  
While ever falling still I fell—  
In a dark pitch-cloud—Who may tell  
Horror on horrors when I knew?  
Beside me rode a mirthless crew:  
The pensioners of Satan's den,  
Invisible to mortal ken,  
Yet ever present to my woe.

<sup>1</sup> The first Christian King of Britain.

<sup>2</sup> Cornish—"the white rock in the wood."

Within a caverned pit below  
His wingéd minions come and go,  
And in the depths of their resort  
The arch-fiend holds his ghastly court.  
Sullen they pace that molten shore,  
And oh, the curse each visage wore !  
Some shrieked aloud, some silent group,  
And, here and there, a restless troop  
Fresh plots against the sons of earth  
Conceived in sulphur brought to birth.

But he, the chief of all their band,  
He who had sat at God's right hand,  
Son of the morning, whilom great,  
Fallen from his height of former bliss,  
Fresh forms of sin did meditate  
Within that bottomless abyss.  
And, as he gave each ready mate  
The mission of his deathless hate,  
Hoarse rung the laughter, void of mirth,  
Approvant of his henchman's worth—  
Frail solace, true, but all that calmed  
The endless torment of the damned.

Their eyes shone in the fitful glare,  
And limned each cheek with dull despair,  
Choked with the fumes each hell-cloud wreathed,  
Faint gasped the wight the fires he breathed.  
Theirs is an all-eternal doom :  
No past but hell to light their gloom,  
And, in the future's fiery womb,  
The living flames of torment leapt.  
And had I tears I could have wept,  
For in that hour it was to me  
As if I shared their agony  
And Satan's form beside me stood.

And then I seemed within a wood,  
Still with the fiend who'd left his band;  
And then the tempter took my hand,  
A doeskin ruddy o'er me slips,  
And pressed a cordial to my lips  
To temper thirst pangs' burning crave;  
And then my limbs he hastes to lave  
With rock-drops in the lower cave.

But first with tender care he bore  
Carādoc to the sounding shore,  
If ocean's breath might healing stay  
Or check the raging fever's sway.  
But not till night lay on the deep  
Fresh herbs narcotic did he steep  
That coax the balm of wayward sleep.  
And, as their torpor o'er me crept,  
His night-watch still he faithful kept  
Long after mists of pearly dawn  
Had flooded every wooded lawn  
And opening glade that lay between.

But, when the morning's span had run,  
And midway shone the noontide sun,  
Heart-easing dreams my soul did wean  
From long unrest, and slumber broke,  
As sounded in my wakeful ear  
The voice melodious that bespoke  
A friend to me for ever dear.  
'Twas priest Carausius of the wood,  
Who'd linked me to my Beltane<sup>1</sup> bride;  
Loved by the clan as our own blood,  
And with us all had willing died.

<sup>1</sup> May-day.

He of the Druids once had been,  
And royalty in him was seen,  
True child of Corin's stem and rod ;  
And all Balenus'<sup>1</sup> craft he knew,  
The wayside flower of variant hue,  
And herbs that each year dying threw  
Their secret virtues on the sod.

But vain my loosened tongue essayed  
The task that recollection gave,  
When down my cheek in ceaseless wave,  
Like a wild river teardrops played,  
As if the long-pent soul to melt  
For secret anguish silent felt.

Like vernal stream or winter brook  
In springtide and first summer's bloom,  
Its babbling course it freely took,  
Unconscious of an early doom

And music sweet to moor and mead  
With rippling harmonies it gave,  
In homage bent the rush and reed,  
Kissed by the gently flowing wave.

And yet anon the sungod's beam  
Relentless on its breast did pour  
With fiery ray—until that stream  
Was seen to human eye no more.

Day upon day more faint it grew,  
Scarce moist the pebbles with its spray,  
With death-drops from the source it drew,  
Still singing sobbed its life away.

<sup>1</sup> The Druid god, corresponding to Apollo.

But He who gave the brook to run,  
Gave in His time reviving rain,  
That, curbed the ruthless June-tide sun,  
The silent stream might flow again.

Yet not as erst its springs arise,  
Nor soft would lap the fringing-lea ;  
But where it crept a torrent flies,  
And floods the meadows with its sea.

Thus from its source a torrent flowed  
To pay the debt my reason owed.  
And soon Carausius' wit discerned  
Half of my tale he had not learned ;  
But when my trembling lips unfold  
The martyrdom and murder cold  
Even Nero's cheek had blushed to own,  
Grief-torn the father, stricken down,  
And in his eye the tear was seen,  
As tho' my woe his own had been.

But most he weeps when I relate  
The tidings of his namesake's<sup>1</sup> fate,  
Till sacred anger found a voice  
To laud the martyr's better choice :  
' Thrice blessed they with blood who seal  
Attachment to their country's weal,  
But happier far the soul that scorns  
His Master to betray.  
To Carence, too, his crown of thorns ;  
But now a diadem adorns  
His brow with jewelled spray.

But deeds so cursed the devils move,  
The might of Christian vows to prove,  
And test our creed's fidelity.

<sup>1</sup> Carence is Carausius.

Thus, in dark seasons, we may know  
Who of good cheer will steadfast be ;  
But this came not of man, I trow,  
In all a woman's hand I see.'

Thus, the good father, and diffused  
Heart-soothing freedom, and a balm  
Whose solace of celestial calm  
My soul with comfort soft did steep,  
And, loosed from toils of second sleep,  
In after-silence long I mused  
Upon the word mine host had used,  
And in my heart of hearts would know  
What lady fair had wrought my woe.  
' But, ponder not,' the old man said,  
' Nor let thy thought with fancy wed,  
And what I tell thou'lt never say ;  
The dead their own dead well may lay,  
And its own record byepast be,  
Yet there will come a vengeance day,  
And recompense for thine and thee.

But—that bedmate of sorcery—  
Woe to the chantress dark of eye !  
Even now I see Heaven's wrath arise  
To winter all her summer skies,  
And the wide floodgates ceaseless pour,  
While ruin's dogs howl at her door !  
A few more nights, another moon—  
For God's swift arrow flieth soon—  
Shall see the hand thy misery wrought  
Fall by the one her gold had bought.'

He spoke with palms uplifted high,  
And prayed that God might hear his cry,  
That to the Throne had wingéd gone.

Upon his visage prophecy,  
And in his look the Druid shone,  
As oft before, in bardic strain,  
He'd told the fortune of the plain,  
Long ere opposing camps had stood  
Entrenched amid the underwood ;  
Or a dark arrow-cloud did rain,  
And painted men, on holy rood,  
A dear-loved oak-glade's bosom stain ;  
Or, as in council in the mead,  
His Druid forbears oft decreed  
Death for a death, and vengeance woke ;  
Or, with rich eloquence bespoke  
The wood-assembly, held the day  
Whose limit was the crescent's ray,  
When with restraint's ripe judgment they,  
If tribal passions riot ran,  
Outlawry breathed and put to ban  
Such as disdained their priestly sway.

Not all was dark 'neath Druid rule ;  
Ofttimes their sage advice did cool  
The 'wilderer passions of a king,  
Or warring clans to parley bring ;  
And from his hand they'd pluck the brand  
Who durst invade his neighbour's land.  
And of their learning, who may say ?  
Æons and æons they had known  
The mysteries of the starry way—  
The wandering planets, and the ray  
Of countless suns and moons long flown,  
Were but the gleam of yesterday  
To our old fathers of the grove.



The logan rocks of old they love,  
And balance' secret too had kened;  
No art but theirs those kings did throne,  
Nor human hand may cast them down.  
Who doubts my word his way must wend  
Toward the Land's remotest End,  
Rude Zennor's weald, the Cromlech field,  
Or bleak Carn Brea whose quartz doth yield  
Adventure's treasure deep concealed.  
Another eve his eye shall see  
The panoply of Druidry—  
The Tolmen rock in Constantine—  
And Gwendron moor where maidens nine  
Their cruel fate must silent pine.

But Druids' star hath set, I deem,  
And with it, like a mazy wood,  
Pride of their worship that had stood,  
Unrivalled cunning, magic-born,  
Hereafter the forgotten theme  
Of vaunted wisdom, that will scorn  
The knowledge of an earlier morn.

But they who hold with me aright,  
And they who weep as I have wept,  
Grove worship, and the hideous night  
Drunk with the blood of living wight,  
Will grant, beneath those fires had slept  
A force, unbending as the oak,  
Our sires to valorous deeds awoke.  
So Druidry, good Britons all,  
Revere thy memory fōrēstal."

## BOOK XVII.

### THE DRUIDS' CAVE.

In the cave Carausius tells the legend of Devil's Bay and Bodellan to Carādoc, who remains with him two months.

The devotion of Carausius to Carādoc and the persecuted Christians, some of whom from time to time bring to them in their seclusion news of the outer world—The persecution waning and the death of Livia reported.

The power of instinct in man as well as in animals.

Carādoc wishes to return home, but Carausius tries to dissuade him from his purpose—The storm.

“ Now, in the gloaming's cool, I view  
The good Carausius from the cave;  
Proud spoils of yesternoon he drew,  
And dipped a bearskin in the wave;  
And, busied with his after-toil,  
Told how a hermit's craft did foil  
The tusky monarch of the glade.

Then, arm in arm, we caveward wend  
Unto our fastness' utmost end,  
Where, on a couch-bed heather-made,  
In the red gleam of day's decline,  
Supped we upon a lordly chine  
Washed with sweet draughts of honeyed mead.

But, ere the foaming bowls recede,  
' To thy long weal ' mine host did cry,  
' May all such chieftains likewise die.' ”

<sup>1</sup> Referring to Carādoc's escape from the boar.

And, rising to the word, he slid  
A gliding moorstone from the dome,  
And with a bantering gesture chid,  
' See where a wandering guest did come.'<sup>1</sup>  
He said, and o'er his cups more bold  
Old stories of the cave he told,  
And many a tale that brought the tear  
Unfolded to my wondering ear.  
How kings in its retreat had lain  
Beneath the greensward and the slain,  
How there the fathers once had taught,  
And here a chief his treasure brought,  
And ladies fair in sore distress  
Had found the while a kind duress  
And shelter in the Druids' home.

And ever on for weal or rue,  
Just as his well-stored memory'd roam,  
Forms of the past the old man drew :  
So to the life, unerring true,  
I seemed to see them in my sleep  
And hear their voices from the deep,  
As, whilst the stars their watches keep,  
Soothed by the ripple of the wave  
I slept within the Druid's cave.

The morrow's morn down from the cave  
I climbed to saunter by the wave  
And catch sea-breezes from the bay  
Whose ice-born breath from farthest north  
With waving pine-crests loved to play,  
Or with rude blast of winter blew  
Against the scarp that met my view.

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, when Carādoc fell into the cave (see end of Book XV.).

There was an ash-grove on the hill,  
Lording it o'er the bracken's frond,  
Upon a slope whence oozed a rill  
To join the dark blue sea beyond.  
Its pithy branches' canopy  
So screened the cave you scarce could see  
Its entrance from the Western sea,  
Or spy the sapling pines above  
That to the zephyrs made their love.  
And all upon the slope there lay,  
'Mid summer bracken's waving spray,  
Wan heather-bells of paler hue  
Than on the open moorland grew;  
And bloomless gorse in wild array  
Disguised the ancient cliffside way,  
Where, 'twixt the brambles, 'neath the pines,  
The woodbine's stem meandering twines,  
And willows lithe in safety grew  
Where oaks unmoved defiance threw  
The boldest blast that Boreas blew  
'Gainst bosques around the caverned grot.

In sooth it was a lonesome spot  
Well suited to the hermit's lot,  
And refuge sure to them that seek  
Escape from vengeance foes would wreak.  
For he who viewed and then would fain  
Renew acquaintance from the main  
Might gazing search for aye in vain.  
And from the land no man, I trow,  
Would deem a cavern lurked below,  
So even lay the surface soil  
Above the work of ancient toil  
That wound beneath the hillside brow.

And in a valley 'neath the glade,  
Where wood-birds carolled sweet and low,  
A summer carpet Nature made  
Of every flower she biddeth grow :  
The bluebell and the violet white,  
The primrose pale that loves the light,  
The ragged robin by the hedge,  
The cowslip hiding in the sedge,  
The briar from the moss below  
Climbing to kiss the mistletoe,  
True children of the forest wild  
Upon its beauties fragrant smiled.

But on the barren scarp beneath  
There reigned a silence still as death,  
Where to the cliffside never came  
The seamews Druids once did tame.  
For every bird that spreadeth wing  
Avoided like a guilty thing  
The beetling crags that knew not spring.  
And strange, I thought, it was to see  
Not a sea-pink face the western sea,  
Not a blade of grass upon the steep,  
Not a sea-fern watered by the deep :  
But the cragside Druids long deemed holy  
Alone in majestic melancholy.  
And then I saw that the barren ledge  
Outskirted the fringe of the cliffside edge  
Where a shrubless waste of moorland bold  
Looked toward the hermit's hold.  
And there were rocks and boulders, too,  
Where gorse and heather never grew  
Upon a sullen hillside banned  
In full sight of a fruitful land.

And said Carausius, who had seen  
The spell cast on me by that scene,  
' Many a sun hath risen and shone,  
Many a moon hath come and gone  
Since the Godhead's majesty  
Said this spot should barren be.  
Tradition long her tale hath held,  
How in the unwrit days of eld  
A Briton than his sires more bold  
Who loved the marshes' marigold  
Nor heeded priest nor King's command  
Passed for a wizard in the land.

It was a Druid of the time  
More lustrous than his honoured line.  
He loved on sunny days to rove,  
And sail the blue waves from his cove  
In a frail coracle—for art  
Had learned him well the fisher's part  
To sail while autumn winds yet sleep  
And prove the treasures of the deep.

So one full moon his barque he gave  
To keeping of the northern wave,  
And with him sailed a trusty crew  
Taught all the wiles their master knew,  
Who, renegades<sup>1</sup> like him, would gain  
The finny riches of the main.  
But in the sea-god deemed a friend  
Too soon the Druid found his end.

And yet the evening he had gone  
The stars smiled on the parting day,  
And vying in their glory shone  
In envy of the moonlight's ray.

<sup>1</sup> By the Druid law the Britons were forbidden to eat fish.

Silent, mysterious, one by one,  
In the cold dome of night they peer;  
Some fixed, some wandering with the sun,  
To mortal vision never clear.  
They smiled upon the Druid's cave,  
The wild flower blooming by the wave,  
And nature's greenery on the steep  
In silvered beauty lulled to sleep.  
They watched the red deer at the moor-stream  
    drink  
In midnight silence by the cliffside brink,  
And saw the coney hasting from his lair  
To revel in the meadow's richest fare,  
The night-hawk gazing from the moonlit sky  
Where life and plenty met her eager eye.

But ere the hunter's moon had shed  
His beam upon Lodennek's<sup>1</sup> head,  
'Twas like a vision of the dead.  
But ask me not, Carādoc, more,  
The Druid's curse is on this shore.  
There is no increase from the soil  
Or fruit to sweeten labour's toil.  
Behold the nether ledge aslant,  
Deserted by the cormorant.  
Nor on the rocks below is seen  
The faintest tinge of seaweed green.  
Where of sly seals ne'er cometh one  
To bask him in the morning sun.  
The coney now forgets to nest  
Where once the osprey plumed his crest,  
Nor will the beast or wild bird come  
For shelter to the Druid's home.

<sup>1</sup> The ancient Padstow.

And as thou see'st it now with me  
For countless moons it still must be.  
The land must barren rest until  
The times have wrought a father's will.  
Some day, perchance, the flower shall bloom  
And heather-bells join with the broom  
To deck the traveller's wandering way.  
The coney then will seek the hill,  
The wild bird warble on the brea,  
But never thro' the ages will  
The Druid's curse leave Devil's Bay.'

'And,' said Carausius, 'since that day  
Five hundred autumns red have gone  
To ruin of a ripe decay.  
It is the waning of the year,  
And now again is very near  
The coming of the destined sun  
That saw the Druid's barque undone.  
Oft, then, near midnight, or so soon  
As darkness veils the setting moon,  
Above the billows muffled sigh  
Is heard a wild, despairing cry  
From here unto Lodennek's head :  
It is the calling of the dead.  
It floats upon the peaceful shore,  
The very name the father bore.  
I've heard it when the seas are still,  
The true voice of the vanished form ;  
For oft the dead where buried will  
Give warning of the coming storm.  
And sometimes, when the sea-mists wet  
The hill that keeps his memory yet,



His barque to human eye will sail  
Above the marshes of the vale,  
Till lost in twilight shadows dim  
Within the forest's eastern rim.

At nightfall from the sea she roams,  
Not here, but past her consorts' homes :  
The fisher craft that knew her best,  
Of wild Bodellan farther west.  
Upon her decks with seaweed green  
No crew or captain e'er is seen ;  
But in the white mist black will float  
On to Chygwiden the stranger's boat,  
And vanish there in friendly ground  
The phantom vessel of the drowned.  
But woe to him who spies her form—  
The surest herald of a storm—  
Upon his body once for all  
Unwonted evil sure will fall.  
As Druids told me tell I thee,  
A weirdsome tale, thou wilt agree.'

Thus and no more Carausius told  
As we regained our cavern hold,  
And o'er the midday meal I chide  
Credulity he fain would hide.  
' Say can it be, good father, thou  
So long hast kept thy convert vow,  
And yet within the Christian pale  
Would'st credence lend the pagan's tale?  
If in thy mind doth linger yet  
The Druid lore thy sons forget,  
Then seemeth me it were more meet  
That thou renounce our precepts sweet  
For those the Britons loved of yore,  
And don the robe thy fathers wore.'

Nought said the father, but I ween  
More mused than in his look was seen,  
As if his spirit longed in vain  
Forbidden fields to seek again,  
And in his heart would still befriend  
Old rites he might not now defend.

By this twice thirty suns to tell  
Had climbed the skies above our cell,  
And still I fain would linger yet,  
Till red October's moon had set,  
And winter called me to my clan,  
A chastened and a better man,  
Nursed by the father's daily care  
From want to plenty's vision fair.

How day by day he sought to bring  
The beggar who was once a king  
Some fresh proof of the love he bore  
The outcast driven to his door!  
Each eve in triumph to the cave  
I'd see him draw with hunter's toil,  
Rejoicing in his latest spoil,  
Some fruit or game he deemed was good  
The rarest of the underwood,  
And oft perchance the livelong day  
Pursued till found or brought to bay.  
And then, before the meal was laid  
Or hunger's pang again allayed,  
The day's adventure like a dream  
Already was his wonder-theme.  
Those happy days! Again I feel  
Carausius' charm upon me steal—  
The magic of a master mind  
And Christian lover of his kind,

Ever a champion of the good  
To Western Britons long a day,  
And Romans also, he had stood  
White as the purest hawthorn spray  
Within the many-acred wood.  
So here to-day in hiding he,  
A prisoner tho' at liberty,  
True to his purpose, never swerved  
An inch or hair's-breadth from the lead  
Of duty which has oft unnerved  
The teachers of a threatened creed.  
True to his word, a friend indeed,  
And mindful of his brother's need,  
In self-imposed captivity  
His first concern was how to free  
The Church's children who, as he,  
In hazard of their lives might be.

Each moonless night to him was borne,  
With bated breath and hope forlorn,  
Some tidings of the latest phase  
The Julyan persecution wore.  
They brought the news by secret ways,  
And wood paths trodden long before,  
Beyond the streamlet on the moor,  
Where sometimes, standing in the river,  
They heard the loosened watch-dog's note  
Close on their track begin to quiver,  
Or pant impatience from his throat,  
As now again he sought fresh cover,  
And now returned with fangs agleam,  
Eager as hunter to discover  
Where last his quarry crossed the stream.

And when beneath the summer night  
They feared the morning's coming light,  
And time was scant for them to wait  
Carausius at the forest gate,  
The message of the refugees  
They carved upon the barks of trees,  
Which soon the father's practised eye  
After their parting would descry,  
And from the wood unravel well  
The news they dare not wait to tell.

So was defiance' flag unfurled,  
And by good woodcraft still we learned  
The doings of the outside world—  
How many dear to us had died,  
The favourites of the countryside,  
Some daring at the last to pray  
God's wrath on those in Cæsar's pay;  
While others, for their comrades' sake,  
Met death in silence at the stake,  
Or, breathing soft a vesper song,  
Would pray for them who did the wrong.

And one fresh morning, when the brown  
Of breeze-kissed autumn's russet gown  
Was rustling on the copse-girt down,  
We heard, from tinnets who had fled,  
The fires were not so briskly fed,  
Then they had ceased, and it was said  
Livia was dying, or was dead.

In all lives there are seasons when  
Instinct will guide the dullest men  
Better than reason leads the wise.

The monitress unseen that flies  
To all creation in disguise,  
Obey her warning soon as heard,  
Man, insect, beast, and forest bird :  
There is oftentimes no better guide  
For hunters on the country-side.  
Through her the threatened ant will bring  
Its tribe beyond their nesting place ;  
Through her the camel sniffs the spring  
Beyond the desert's arid face.

The wild bird of another race  
Keeps never record of the time  
To safely seek his native clime ;  
But when the day of flight is near  
For him to cross the blue sea clear,  
A still voice whispers in his ear  
That there are other fields beyond,  
Tho' Briton summers ne'er so fond.

And I have seen the wisest schemes  
Of men as nothing to the dreams  
Of instinct when at times we feel  
A secret impulse o'er us steal  
That will not its own source reveal,  
And seldom tells us why we should  
Do what it urges for our good.

So was my case that afternoon,  
Watching the setting of the moon  
'Mid angry clouds of varied form,  
Forerunners of a coming storm.  
I felt, I knew not wherefore so,  
It was the time for me to go,

And that my homeward wandering  
Some lasting good to them would bring  
Who once had sheltered 'neath the wing  
Of me, Carādocus, a King.

But bold adventure ne'er commends  
Itself unto the venturer's friends,  
And my wild instinct to return  
Soon as the father's ear did learn  
He first embraced me—then he smiled  
As he would coax a wayward child—  
With fascination's ready wit,  
And custom's ancient law unwrit,  
Gave, like the true host that he was,  
A hundred reasons without cause  
Why I should yet prolong my stay  
With him till winter's early day.

Then, with the courtliness of Kings,  
New dangers to my ear he brings,  
And in the Druid's practised way  
On older fears began to play,  
Saying—' for ever and a day  
How many deeds of daring failed  
Delayed until the moon had paled  
But he who'd win a doubtful day  
Must venture with her maiden ray.'

So did Carausius ramble on—  
And, while in argument he shone  
Bright as the crystal icy clear,  
Disturbed, but not persuaded yet,  
I watched the moon storm-driven set

Forced for the nonce to hiding peer  
Over a cloud bank's curtain near  
Whose ever drifting watery veil  
Grew blacker on the frenzied gale.

Now raged the tempest fiercer still  
And lashed the breakers to its will.  
White, on the rocks that intervene,  
The boiling surf is frequent seen ;  
Now backward forced, an angry slave  
Upon the fast receding wave ;  
Now, hissing madly, scourged and torn,  
Upon a greater billow borne,  
It shoots toward the nearest land,  
Till, broken on the rock-bound strand,  
When, lifted high in column grey,  
It soared above the cliffside way,  
And, strong in death, with untamed will,  
One moment hovers o'er the hill  
To fall the next, with conquered foam,  
Uncoffined to its ocean home."

## BOOK XVIII.

### THE DRUID PHILOSOPHY.

Carausius makes the storm his text for a discourse on the elements—The immortality of the soul, and the danger of unbelief—An earthquake and tidal wave now occurring he explains their phenomena to Carādoc and the Druid view of nature—The power of faith—Peace and war—No one first cause—Even new elements may be found—The animals prey on one another, and man in commerce no less on his fellows—All progress a circle—Inequality of man, but combination possible—Chance and free will—Punishment after death part of immortality.

“ It was the darkest hour of night,  
And we, with sleep a banished wight,  
Were waiting for the morning light  
In a far corner of the cave  
Snug and secure from wind and wave.  
We heard the spring-tide to and fro  
Swollen with the tempest come and go  
In a sea-cavern far below,  
And ever swirling crash and beat  
The living rock beneath our feet.  
And with the keen North-wester’s howl  
That, with the billows, cheek by jowl,  
Pierced every crack and rime without;  
It might have been the demon’s shout,  
Tormented yet with lingering doubt;  
Or all the fiends of hell let loose  
To violate their latest truce.



But, 'mid the hurricane's alarm,  
Where we were safe and free from harm  
The Druid's converse had a charm  
That would have held me listening still,  
Had I the power to sleep at will ;  
For, with the wit that ne'er consents  
To be the creature of events,  
He seized upon the elements  
And boldly shaped them to his tale.

I heard him at the midnight hour  
Declare the limits of their power ;  
How earth, sea, fire, and the gale  
From age to age must ever fail  
The mightiest work or meanest toy  
Of man or nature to destroy.

' 'Tis so,' said he, ' for, know thou well,  
Substance is indestructible.

Heat may transform, or water swell  
To bursting point, but there is left  
Some of the body that is reft,  
And all we use or they transform  
In death assumes another form.  
The oak-log felled at man's desire  
To burn upon the winter fire,  
The good ship broken by the storm,  
One lives anew but pale wood ashes,  
The other, where the set tide splashes,  
Drifting shoreward from the main  
Odd spars and planks will still remain.

The tree fades 'neath the autumn sky,  
And vegetation seems to die ;  
But every leaf that falls to earth  
In its decaying finds new birth,

And, resting from its former toil,  
New riches addeth to the soil.

And like the leaf we too must fade  
Upon the hillside or the glade ;  
For, as the iron yields to rust,  
So at the last the strong man must  
Succumb to nature and be dust,  
Worn out with old age if the star  
Of luck have followed him so far  
As fourscore years, and plenty smile,  
With good health, on him all the while.

Life is a stile which in his time  
Each from the cradle learns to climb.  
All perish, and, so far at least,  
We are no better than the beast.  
But we have other fields to tread  
Beyond the barrows of the dead,  
And there are woods more distant, too,  
Hid from the glimpse of mortal view,  
Where shines afar the true man's goal,  
The promised vision of the soul.

Let unbelieving hearts deny  
The truths of immortality,  
But through forgotten ages we,  
Druid and Vates, serf and King,  
Unto its cult did faithful cling,  
As do the Christians, and to me  
'Tis as the true salt of the sea  
Which flows unfettered, open, free,  
Beyond the prisoned lands we see.

O deep ! so like Eternity,  
How little is revealed of thee,  
The parent eld of Earth and Time !  
The mariner of every clime,  
Who on his chart has learned to trace  
The hidden reef and shoal or race,  
Knows somewhat of thine half-tracked face ;  
But all the rest, so far, has been  
Part of the dim and vast unseen.

So is the doctrine of the soul  
Which Druids, unimpaired and whole  
From ages hoar and altars grey,  
Have handed to the present day.  
Let unbelievers scoff who may ;  
We know the dead at times appear,  
The spirits of the just made clear  
To beckon from another sphere.

But that far distant land—who may  
Unveil its light of endless day?  
Or track the ether's sea-blue way  
Across the waves of unknown race  
That fill the boundless gulf of space?  
No man may see his Maker's face  
At any time, or sound that sea—  
That ocean of eternity.  
The little glimpse that God vouchsafes  
And immortality we feel  
So spur us that the spirit chafes  
As if beneath a phantom heel.  
And in our prison here of clay  
We long at times to be away,  
And leave this poor world's scanty dole  
For the rich Kingdom of the soul.

Obedient e'er to Justice' nod,  
And joint heirs of a risen God,  
Britons hereafter, O ! be slow  
In days of Empire to forego  
Or let an enemy displace  
The one sheet-anchor of your race.  
For dynasties will come and go,  
And Britain's fortunes ebb and flow,  
While others to their ruin roll ;  
But the pure doctrine of the soul,  
It is the beacon-spark divine  
That burneth on a just God's shrine,  
Which when the Britons will not see  
Then Britain's might shall cease to be.'

Thus with unerring vision he  
Warned unknown peoples yet to be ;  
But, as he spoke, his words were lost  
In the ripe fury of the gale  
That seemed resolved at any cost  
Our holt to make of none avail.  
For thrice the ground beneath us shook,  
And thrice our grey-walled cavern nook  
A sepulchre looked like to be ;  
And my one fear, to find a grave,  
Buried alive within the cave,  
The Druid marked and said to me :

' Fear not the hurricane, these walls,  
Built of the granite's trusty vein,  
If e'er it hap that ruin falls,  
Sure not to-day will yield amain.  
So rest assured the tidal wave  
For other Kings has left the cave,

Which, as thou camest here unbidden,  
So many in its time hath hidden ;  
For seemeth me the billows hoarse  
Have run their dread unwonted course,  
And, now the storm hath come to crown,  
The seas themselves may quiet down.

These fierce irruptions of the deep,  
Which its set-tides for Time doth keep,  
Are not the shock of every day ;  
But only come at seasons when,  
Unforetold by the wisest men,  
Earth's hidden fires long-chafing may  
Defy the crust that holds them, and,  
Upheaved beneath the wave, the land  
Disturbs the balance of the tide.

Then from their bed of rock or sand  
The giant billows, riven wide,  
Beyond their limits will divide,  
And with white ruin forward ride  
Until the troubled land subside.  
Mad with the force of earth and fire  
And fed with conquest's new desire  
Sometimes they never will recede  
Or yield possession of a mead,  
Scorning from vantage to retire  
Or cede dominion violence gave.  
Ah ! then they ride o'er many a grave,  
And their white-horses' foam will lave  
Sea-shore and coast-line, field and cave,  
Until the land itself must fall,  
And they who till it lose their all.

All which, I deem, doth clearly show  
How little certain here below  
The lesser things of life must be,  
When even the elements agree  
Yet greater forces to obey.  
And we perforce are here to-day,  
Much as the lands that stand in awe  
And tremble till the seas be still,  
All governed by a Higher Law  
That mouldeth nature to Its Will.

The Hand that fashioned man and brute  
Never made nature absolute.  
For every law but One,<sup>1</sup> we know,  
The child of change must ever grow.  
As nature out of chaos came  
No kind that is was e'er the same.  
The creatures of a fabled name,  
Centaur and Dragon, long have ceased—  
Half brute the one, the other beast—  
But animals at large now living  
Can trace from them without misgiving.  
And what are we?—perchance as they,  
The Sons of Earth conceived in sorrow,  
To learn the nature of to-day  
Is not the nature of to-morrow !

Howbeit if so it imports not,  
We are the Sons of God begot,  
For, if as beasts that tread the lay,  
He fashioned us from primal clay,  
Natheless, while we, beneath His hand,  
Sprang from the rock, or earth, or sand,

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, the law of God.

In our creation was a time  
When we received the spark divine,  
And when with speech He made us whole,  
God breathed in us His gift—the soul.

Now, touching nature, as we see  
Her strength is not supremacy,  
So every herb and healing flower,  
And well, long-hid beneath the sod,  
That never knew the dowsing rod,  
All have a limit to their power,  
And each obeys the law of God.

The very herb whose odours please  
Can heal or cure but one disease,  
Not all its victims—ofttimes some  
Will go uncured as they have come—  
And of the spring that needs no rain  
But thro' the ages hid hath lain,  
And laughing flowed beneath the plain,  
Thou know'st hereafter on the spot,  
Upon a day expected not,  
The rod that owns the dowser's finger  
Above its source will beckoning linger,  
And where it points unerring tell—  
Where is thy secret now, O well?—  
All have their bounds—to all must be  
A limit of their sovereignty—  
And as the power of herb and spring,  
And every plant or living thing,  
So is the sway of chief or King  
Whose deeds of lustre and of worth  
Pale 'neath another's here on earth.  
However great a man may seem,  
A greater will be or has been.

All man hath built for war below  
The hand of man may overthrow.  
The fortress deemed impregnable  
Can soon become a living hell,  
And yield unto a lesser race  
Than they who set it in its place.

Altho' a fort may look to be  
Invincible by land and sea,  
A day will come when tribes scarce known,  
For justice and a patriot throne,  
A good King's cause will make their own,  
And such their land and home to save  
The tower will level to the wave.  
Partly by valour and in part  
By skill that nerves the hero's heart  
They win who dare, if strong of limb,  
And, in the fertile mind of him  
Who shapeth victory from defeat,  
Injustice only breeds more skill  
In them she crushes—for the will  
Of man is such that he may cheat  
The deepest schemes or plots of ill,  
If faith uphold him in his task  
The boon to win he dares to ask.

And, for the faith that in them is,  
What multitudes in hopes of bliss,  
Hoping hereafter they should gain  
More pleasure than their passing pain !  
What numbers we ourselves have known  
In a false cause their lives lay down !  
Peace unto them, they live anew  
Not in the wanton joy they deemed,



For misspent lives by death redeemed,  
But now familiar with the true  
They learn who here were born to woe,  
What recompense to them is due,  
Not altogether false below.  
Their faith was error, but they were  
Not faithless to the cause they chose,  
And he who will the truth aver  
Finds good in all his warring foes.  
For no man for the battle keen  
All evil in his time hath been ;

No conqueror for lust of war  
Or alien blood has called his car ;  
But in his enterprise there lay  
Some time or other in the fray,  
In the mid-victory or at bay,  
The thought to benefit the name  
Of race or clan from whence he came.

Time sometimes dulls the very fame  
Of issues on which battles hung.  
Many a victor of the day,  
Crowned with the laurel or the bay,  
Has lived to hear his praises sung  
By those he vanquished when their eyes  
Have seen a blessing in disguise.

Be not deceived, they lie who hiss,  
War not an unmixed evil is,  
Rather the enemy of sloth,  
The last resort of nations loth  
To brook oppression's barbed heel,  
Who, once enfranchised, e'er must feel  
Without war freedom ne'er had been.

War is the rule of law on earth.  
The first fruits of a nation's birth,  
Which only by its strength may live;  
For if a race unwarlike thrive,  
'Tis only kept the while alive  
Dependent on the arms of those  
Pledged to defend it from its foes.

War is the union that is strength—  
The power to banish at arms' length  
Others upon Ambition's path  
Who covet all the strong man hath—  
And this, a cause of things, a truth  
Stripped of its sickly garb of ruth,  
The great men of all time have seen.

War is the law of power—the state  
Evolved from varied tribes' estate—  
The lesser swallowed by the great,  
Who only tolerate the small  
That 'twixt them and their rivals lie,  
And such, tho' weak, become a wall  
For and against each enemy.

War has its ills, but man fulfils  
In fighting his true destiny,  
And finds his reckoning or release  
Sometimes in immortality.  
Death is no hardship—all must die—  
But in an everlasting peace  
The germs of greater evil lie.

Man is a fighting animal  
No less than others so we call,  
Who, while they live untamed and roam  
The wood and plain their native home,

Only the fighters of a strain  
The fitness of their race maintain  
By driving weaklings to the wall.

When in a forced captivity  
The creatures live that once were free,  
There is no danger lest the weak  
Mate with the consorts they would seek—  
While men themselves the breed control,  
Select the strong to keep it whole,  
It never will degenerate be.

But with mankind—tho' in his spring,  
The death of war must ruthless bring  
Man's own extinction, like a thing  
Forgotten, lost, or out of date,  
Unless the State assume his fate  
And breed him like the calf or foal,  
To keep the stock intact and whole.

If War die out, and Peace become  
The arbitress of Christendom,  
Man, who by battle once was freed  
But now disdains the warrior's meed,  
Will, for his preservation's sake  
And fear of other nations, make  
The State controller of his breed.

With War no more the family tie  
With it no less must surely die.  
The State as breeder will deny  
The right of fatherhood to him  
Whose force abated is or dim,  
And only those permit to live  
Who are the fittest to survive.

And with the family tie will go  
The rich and poor and high and low,  
The right to labour and to sow;  
And property itself become  
The State's possession—not a home—  
And Art controlled like industry  
With genius sicken, fade and die.

War is the artist's truest friend.  
Peacetime all great conceptions fetters,  
Save traders groping to their end,  
And upstarts base who hate their betters.  
But statesmen, poets, men of letters,  
Have reached their zenith every age  
When wars of conquest held the stage.

If never war again arose  
After the rival nations chose  
To be but brothers—no more foes—  
A state of peace all war might end,  
Yet peace no less on war depend,  
Without whose weapon peace must be  
Reft of its only guarantee.

Peace never made a single state,  
And but for war had never been.  
It is an error to ascribe  
All good unto her subtle bribe,  
When through the ages seen afar  
The only lasting peace has been  
The one that followed on a war.

Is there no glory but of peace?  
Wars on the earth will no more cease  
Than good from one source only flow;  
Man's vital span is but a lease  
Of stress and struggle here below.

And of his errors not the least  
Taught by philosopher and priest  
Is the belief each act and thing  
From one cause, and one only, spring.

Rather the earth itself is rife  
With lessons of the Ages' strife,  
And all experience goes to prove  
The great and lesser things of life  
From varied causes came to move.  
From the beginning no one cause  
Has fashioned nature, man or thing;  
There were no elements or laws  
When Chaos was their only King.  
But nature like a mighty stream  
Ever meandering in its flow  
Changes with every passing scene,  
Tho' sophists will not have it so.  
So rugged, even, rapid, slow  
From age to age has been her race,  
No man may trace her shifting face  
Or guess the future from her brow.

Just as the stream whose sources many  
And tributaries make a river  
Which yet as great a river joins,  
Where is the single source, if any  
Save that imagination coins?  
And as the birth the end must be  
Darker than all uncertainty.  
Nature an arrow in God's quiver,  
Say, do the seas attract the river,  
Or did the rivers make the sea?

A multitude of causes act  
From age to age in every clime,  
But nature has no right or pact  
Immutable from God with Time.  
Lost elements in hill and stream  
And others new may yet be found,  
Changing to old—nothing I deem  
Is stable in a shifting ground.  
Of space there is a boundless range;  
But nature is the law of change,  
Ofttimes so winding, cunning, slow,  
Her subtleties no man would know  
But for the remnants he has found  
Of what hath lain deep underground.

The very creatures that did mate  
In after ages only hate,  
When raving, fierce, to kinship blind,  
They prey upon their former kind;  
For by a subtle process slow  
Another kind each comes to be,  
And some the land do come to know  
That erst did never quit the sea,  
Some swimming now that once did fly,  
Some flying now that once did crawl.  
The friend is now an enemy—  
They prey on one another all.

No less than nature so is man  
Without a fixed or settled plan.  
As all have been so now is each,  
Blood-draining as the thirsty leech.  
All progress is a circle slow

Of thought, discovery, action, speech  
Others have learned as now we know.  
Cruel from boyhood, when a man  
Each spoils the weaker of his clan;  
Who, though the flag of commerce waves,  
No less endure the lot of slaves,  
And give their daily blood to build  
The fortune that their lord has willed  
Iniquity with gold shall gild.

The world of toil is ever filled  
With husbandmen who, born unskilled,  
Can never from a meagre wage  
Provide a sustenance for age.  
But these hereafter may combine  
With those who can afford to dine—  
The skilled who will one day become  
The real masters of their trade—  
And both in full alliance made  
Their lot may better until some  
For higher pay turn renegade  
And fawn on those they have betrayed—  
Not ruined, for the remnant will  
In self-defence combine until  
They force the rich unto their will.

All grades of men are as the soil—  
A layer formed by nature's toil,  
A lower layer to overlie,  
And with its richer loam befriend.  
The upper claims the mastery,  
But, as the Earth, man to the end  
Upon the lowest must depend.

In all times when the very rich  
Oppress the labourer in the ditch  
Whose race is common with their own,  
Suffering unbearable will bring  
A grim upheaval—sinew, bone,  
'Gainst royal blood, until the King  
And lord are buried with the throne.

The world will seldom long endure  
The blood-rule of a mob impure ;  
And, if the many, once oppressed,  
When from their vengeance they return,  
Only combine to steal and burn,  
Swift with the ruin of the best  
The reign of Chaos will return.

Man is the child of circumstance,  
Dependent on the whim of chance,  
With some free will his course to guide.  
In all the region of romance,  
Throughout bleak fact's dominion wide,  
Endeavour never can advance  
So much as fortune will decide.

Fortune is mistress of us all,  
And Chance her handmaid best to woo.  
How else doth talent rise to fall,  
In spite of all it strive to do?  
The wise could frequent carry through  
The sagest scheme in Wisdom's hall,  
But for their brothers' much ado !



Chance is capricious, often slow  
To give her favourites yes or no;  
Each fresh attempt ends just as meek.  
When what we wish eludes us so  
Why bribe the strong to tempt the weak?  
'Tis only careless where we go  
We stumble on the prize we seek.

If man could Free Will's sceptre sing,  
Why not the drunkard quaff the spring?  
Why not the miser haste to give?  
For both will envy those who thrive  
On tenets they cannot subscribe.  
Yet both remain as all their tribe  
By drink or avarice kept alive.

Is there a bee without a hive?  
Lives there an ant without his queen?  
Not of their will is either seen  
Toiling beneath a summer sky  
A winter sustenance to give,  
But driven by necessity  
They labour when they can to live.

No people will elect a queen,  
And of the things that graze or prey  
Few will a female's rule obey;  
But where a father's name has been  
Spotless or royal long-a-day,  
The daughter of a sovereign may  
Succeed unto her father's sway.

The annals of the Britons give  
Women as fit to rule as live ;  
But of the sex few only can  
Unravel statecraft as a man,  
And queens who've triumphed o'er their foes  
Have done so less through queenship than  
The counsel of the men they chose.

The danger of a ruling queen  
Is mostly in her marriage seen,  
Which may unto her people bring  
An alien enemy for King ;  
While, if at home she weddeth one  
Of her own choosing, always some  
Intrigue behind the throne will come.

If women equal have with men  
The rights and duties men enjoy  
Insidious will follow then  
Changes of lordship and employ,  
The weaker vex the stronger sex  
And other problems more complex  
Mankind to trouble and annoy.

Were women born to breed or lead?  
Certain for one if not the other.  
Some are designed as much to rule,  
As others man's desire to cool ;  
But if the sex no more give heed  
To man, and only play the mother,  
Their leadership the race may smother.

Woman who sways already man  
May well resign the sway of things  
Unto her subject, tho' the name  
Of master to his slavery clings.  
For as a trust to man she came—  
The real slaves are only kings  
Or men who live without an aim.

Silk-threaded is a woman's rule,  
Sometimes a curse, sometimes a boon,  
Changing as fabrics at the loom  
Or silkworm in his snug cocoon.  
For in her hands the dullest fool  
Will look more wise,—the wisest soon  
Becomes a cipher or a tool.

Man's weakness she and he her strength,  
Just as their Maker first decreed  
In the relations of the sex  
The weaker should the stronger lead,  
Receive of years a greater length,  
And he from causes multiplex  
Less vigour to old age concede.

No weakness of humanity  
Is quite the same in every man ;  
Vice, like a doctor without fee,  
Acts never on a settled plan.  
For some she doses vile to be,  
Taints many with heredity,  
But leaves a few their full life's span.

To each man when temptations come  
Is one to which he will succumb ;  
Some will resist the final burst,  
While others run to meet it first.  
And when they see or hear it some,  
To greater pleasures blind or dumb,  
Rush to the one for which they thirst.

All pleasure is a fancy field  
Where each his cherished treasure finds.  
Often her humblest haunt will yield  
The fullest joy to noble minds—  
The sense part gratified most binds.  
Complete exhaustion is not bliss,  
But rather pleasure's Nemesis.

Work is our greatest pleasure here  
If fertile and it bring good cheer ;  
But overwork is always dear  
To those who labour and who pay.  
There is no reason in the fear  
That work will kill—a greater ill  
Is how the idle spend their day.

The idle less contented are  
Than those at labour or at war,  
And, when they threaten for their bread,  
The greatest danger to a state.  
Every sedition finds its head  
In bloodshed, and the mob unfed  
Who will not work deserve their fate.

All men will yield to any crime  
If tempted strong enough to fall ;  
Temptations vary with a clime,  
As race, revenge, or need doth call.  
Men risen are not as they climb ;  
What one cries ' crime ' another time  
Is but a fault, or none at all !

Some who would rather starve than steal  
Will plunder for their children's weal ;  
Others who smiled at suicide  
Have welcomed it and by it died.  
And women driven mad will feel  
Less guiltless of infanticide  
Than motherhood without a bride.

All mad for a brief season go  
If circumstance but give the blow  
Sufficient for their overthrow—  
It may be fear, or hatred's sore,  
Or grief or joy for friend or lover,  
And they who sanest were before  
The soonest after will recover.

Only a few may claim to be  
Quit of responsibility.  
The very child and aged sometimes  
Like the insane can have no crimes  
Or morals either, so to say,  
All others after must betimes  
Rise for the final judgment day.

But for God's judgment of the dead  
Evil as good we might obey,  
For wicked men die in their bed,  
And good men suffer every day.  
Here is no final reckoning true  
Where often thieves escape their due  
And creditors forego their pay.

All peoples through the ages long  
Have had a sense of right and wrong—  
And as their knowledge, slave or free,  
All after punishment must be—  
And with it is the consciousness  
That God will not forget to bless  
So far as we had power to see.

Within the conscience of mankind  
The presence of the soul we find,  
Whose understudy is the mind,  
Allotting each his part to play.  
Some with a greater power or less,  
Success or failure—consciousness  
Is with us ever, day by day.

To every man for good or ill  
Is born some measure of free will :  
How much or little neither he  
Nor all his fellows here may know.  
'Tis part of immortality,  
Each one, so far as he was free,  
Shall reap the evil he did sow.' "

## BOOK XIX.

### THE DRUID GODS.

From the example of the rebel admiral of the same name Carausius argues who commands the sea commands Britain, and prophesies the kingdoms of the future will be sea empires.

Admiration of Carādoc for Carausius's learning and piety—The vision of the Druid gods—Carādoc sets out on his homeward journey—The weak point in Carausius's character.

“ AND NOW, my son, dost say to me,  
‘ A truce to all philosophy?’  
The secrets only Druids learn  
’Tis fitting that a King should know,  
Or else on yonder bed of fern  
Sleep had I counselled long ago.  
But ere my converse find its end  
Or we repose till dawn, my friend,  
One prophecy my tongue would make  
Unerring for the island’s sake.  
Like iron’s heat the future brands  
Its impress on my willing mind.  
And I, who hold these forest lands  
More dear than human love can yearn,  
Their tangled fate must now unwind  
And tell the truths that in me burn.

’Tis known to every Briton how  
The false<sup>1</sup> Carausius from his prow

<sup>1</sup> To the Emperor Diocletian, whose admiral he was. Falsely accused, and learning his death was plotted by the Court party, he revolted and took over the whole fleet with him. For nearly seven years he was master of Britain, and at the time of his death the Romans had already begun building a new fleet numerically superior to his.

The rebel flag on high unfurled,  
And with usurped authority  
Defiance bade the Roman world.  
Two autumns and a lustre he,  
Cruising at will the cliff-bound seas  
That 'twixt our isle and Gallia flow,  
Levied his rule with every breeze  
On every galley fast or slow.

Bold in conception, no less cool  
To hazard all on pirate rule,  
So long as life to him remained,  
By sea-dominion sheer he reigned  
A King in word and deed to all,  
And held the isle by sea and land  
Within the hollow of his hand,  
Up to the hour of his fall.<sup>1</sup>

But as he ruled so others must,  
If this our land be reckoned free,  
Tho' now subjection's cankering rust  
Eat out the heart of liberty.  
Be not deceived hereafter, ye,  
But seek the kingdom of the sea—  
A fleet good commerce to sustain  
Our native oak-woods will maintain.  
War-galleys, too, built to defend  
The land in safety to its End.  
All in the future I foresee,  
Empire will come and ever be  
Unto the kingdoms of the sea.'

<sup>1</sup> He was stabbed by his own friend Alecto, at York.



Thus did the Druid's practised care  
And gift of prophecy unbare  
The treasure-mine of all his caste.  
I listened eager to the last,  
As when his converse had begun,  
To hear the secrets of the Past,  
Present, and Future rolled in one.  
And as he ceased I pondered more  
Upon the fervour of his lore;  
So incorruptible, so true;  
And, holding fast thro' old and new  
To the sheet-anchor of his creed,  
He seemed to me, who heard indeed,  
And hearkened still with wonder dumb,  
One out of time to judgment come,  
Born with the priest's divining rod,  
Giving the glory all to God  
Who had decreed that he should know  
Mankind and earth so deep below.

Now, from much speaking long athirst,  
Carausius fills another bowl  
More sweet and potent than the first,  
And then another—not the last—  
And brings a haunch of venison whole.  
Our troubles to the winds now cast,  
We drink to reason and the soul,  
And toast old friendship on the brink  
Of morning—still we drink,  
Until a pale white glimmer shone  
Its welcome through a crevice chink.  
It was the virgin beam of dawn  
That called us to the forest lawn;

Another day come to the birth,  
And faint with being had begun.  
What was its hope or promise worth?  
Or should we see another sun?

The storm had dwindled to a breeze,  
And, as we stepped upon the leas  
To mark the promise of the morn,  
The scent of many flowers borne  
With mist-veiled fragrance on our path  
Seemed like an incense to appease  
The malice of the storm-god's wrath.  
We turned toward the barren plot  
That looked upon the scarp beneath.  
It was so silent, there was not  
Upon the rocks beyond the green  
The faintest rustle, or a breath  
Of flowers where the storm had been.

But, by the crags and boulders gray,  
In the half-light of struggling day,  
We saw—I never can forget  
It—tho' the future may  
Have scenes more dreadful yet for me—  
We saw, there in the light of day,  
By those grey crags that face the sea,  
The Druid gods in majesty  
Standing beside their granite throne.

Taranys, chiefest, sat alone—  
He whose angry nod or frown  
The rolling thunder can bring down;  
And, next him, spritely, waiting stood  
His messenger who wings the flood,

Guide of the way, from whose torch came  
Trade, commerce, art, and genius' flame—  
Mercurius is his Roman name—  
And ruthless Hesus, God of War,  
We knew him well by many a scar  
And blood-gleam red of living fire  
That from his nostrils streamed afar.

But bright Balenus,<sup>1</sup> like a star,  
With eye that never seemed to tire,  
Watched his own sunlight mounting higher;  
And from his brow a golden flood  
Of glory, covering but a rood,  
Yet linked continuous with each ray  
Of daylight coming from the sun,  
So dazzling shone we could not say  
Whether Balenus made the day  
Or they twain were together one.  
A moment only 'thwart the sky  
To mortal vision thus he shone;  
And in the twinkling of an eye  
He and his fellow-gods were gone.  
The cold sweat pouring from my brow,  
I stood in silence marvelling how  
Each left his earthly throne of granite,  
As if bound for another planet;  
And whether they had come compelled  
To see how well the Christians held  
Their vantage 'gainst the heathen, or—  
In spite of teachings they abhor—  
Of their own will, and nothing loth,  
Hoping, while Christ and Cæsar, both  
So well-matched, battled for a throne,  
Old rites condemned might yet be free,  
And Druidry come by its own.

<sup>1</sup> The sun god of the Britons.

But priest Carausius smiling, said  
 It was a pilgrimage they made  
 In honour of the Druid's shade<sup>1</sup> !  
 That wandered there at large, may be  
 Still hankering for the western sea.

It was high noon, and in the wood  
 Where two bold magpies watched their brood,  
 Under a thorn-copse in the bend  
 I parted from my Druid friend,  
 The man of mirth and mysteries,  
 And thought the omen<sup>2</sup> not amiss ;  
 Eager to go but loth to leave,  
 Long did my chastened spirit grieve  
 Such sweet companionship as his.  
 Great thoughts to action seldom are allied,  
 And if in him the true, the tried,  
 One fault stood out 'twas only this :  
 Good nature was his Nemesis.  
 Whate'er his lot the very best  
 Was none too good for every guest ;  
 And from his youth he never could  
 Resist a beggar's winning mood.  
 A princely fortune dissipated,  
 To thwart the foreign race he hated,  
 Had left him poor but in the love  
 The common people to him bore.

And when the land again lay sore,  
 Secret he plotted<sup>3</sup> to remove

<sup>1</sup> See Book XVII.

<sup>2</sup> " One for sorrow,  
 Two for mirth,  
 Three for a wedding,  
 Four for a birth."

<sup>3</sup> There was a plot, of which at the time Caradoc was ignorant.

The crafty Roman, and to yoke  
Our tribes in union well bespoke,  
Never suspecting all he strove  
The enemy dissembling knew,  
And kept their knowledge secret, too.  
So on his head did concentrate  
The sleeping fires of Roman hate,  
That when the persecution came  
Burst into all the greater flame."

## BOOK XX.

### THE DEATH OF LIVIA.

Carādoc, returning home from the Druid's cave, learns on the way that the Emperor Julyan and Livia have died, and a new legate sent by the Emperor Jovian has just arrived, and wishes to associate Carādoc as before with the Romans in the government of the Western Britons—Carādoc then learns how Livia died, accidentally poisoned by her maid Sabina with the draught she had, by her mistress's instructions, prepared for the legate Julius, Livia's husband—Before dying Livia, believing the poison was wilfully given her, stabs Sabina, who dies first—Carādoc ends his narrative asking Piran and Wingela to remain with him, and promising to assist them in their mission.

“ On sped the hours, eve follows noon.  
Another morning—and now, soon  
Each forest-tree that drank the dew,  
And every path I trod was new—  
Far down the glade an opening view  
Of moorland to my vision spread,  
And, looking where the broom was gay,  
Beyond the confines of the wood  
I saw where shallow-rooted stood  
Three elm-trees, old and gaunt of form,  
That feared the track of every storm—  
The last land-mark Carausius gave  
To guide me well upon my way—  
Fanned by the cool moor-breeze's wave  
They slumbering sighed their autumn lay,

And, in a hollow, heather bound,  
Only a stone's throw from the path,  
A sheltering coppice-edge I found,  
And, watching daylight slowly die,  
Drank with a painter's faithful eye  
The copper-tinted aftermath  
Of a red sundown's burning sky.

The coming morn, ere starlight waned,  
By forest craft I safely gained  
The hill of Probus, near a wood,  
Above the river where each rood  
Of pastureland is old and good.  
Here, ere my journey found its end,  
An old disciple and a friend  
Of good Carausius, forest-born,  
Did entertain me till the morn.

They told me rumour flew the land  
Of changes tragic at the court;  
But no one of our hunted band  
Had dared to spy the grim resort  
Of tyranny on Valda's<sup>1</sup> strand.  
Content with tidings of a sort,  
And holding each his life in hand,  
To run the hazard all were slow  
When either to the stake might go.

They wept and urged me with them stay,  
If but an Indian summer's day,  
And linger by the forest's hem  
Till luck, or strength, or stratagem  
Might force the secret of the war.

<sup>1</sup> Falmouth and the district near the mouth of the Fal.

But with the morning I was far  
Below Tresillian's reedy bar  
And upper reaches of the Val,<sup>1</sup>  
Where oft the feast and festival  
Of druidry had come and gone.  
And when the noontide sunbeam shone  
It found me three leagues farther on,  
Near to the wood-hid river's mouth,  
Where winds blow softly from the south  
And every sea-wave stays his race  
A luring naiad to embrace.  
There, standing by a boulder gray,  
To shade me from the hot noon-ray,  
I saw a strange ship in the bay.

And, as I marked her hull dark-browed,  
And scanned her mast from shroud to shroud,  
Beneath a bosk asunder torn  
One ran to me and cried aloud :  
' Hail, Briton King, whose fate unseen  
So deep a mystery hath been !  
For we had deemed thee past the bourn  
Of earthly things until to-day.  
Even the hopeful mourn thy doom,  
And, with suspense's double gloom,  
The forester knows not to whom  
His forestage to pay.'

He told me swift and free from dread,  
The Persecution was no more.  
Cæsar and Livia both were dead.  
Another Cæsar now had sent  
Another legate to our shore  
Who sought my counsel and consent  
To rule my people, as before.

<sup>1</sup> The Fal.



We lingered not when both intent  
To gain the Roman settlement,  
And herald to the land that day  
A Christian legate's peaceful sway.  
But when upon our silent way  
We now were near the Harbour side  
I asked him how the Livia died.

There was a garden-path that led,  
With beeches interlaced o'erhead,  
A furlong and a half, perchance,  
From where the dryads lead the dance,  
And holly, holm, and mountain ash  
Are safe above the river's splash;  
The road led upward to a hill—  
You still may see it if you will—  
Right from the legate's hall unto  
A former haunt of lovers true,  
But now a Roman lord's preserve  
It is the pheasant's daily run.

Here from the heat the deer would come  
And languid drones forget to hum,  
Within the grove hard by a bower—  
Whose friendly covert oft did serve  
For shelter from the northern shower—  
It was a summer-house of cones  
Plucked where the wind-swept pine-tree moans,  
Linked with the skill that cunning could  
Command to hide the parent wood.  
Within, all fitted as a dwelling,  
It stopped the loungee from rebelling,  
And, boasting of a pine-wood floor,  
Possessed one window and a door.

Hither the Livia on a day  
Alone with Sabine took her way  
Straight up the pathway, arm in arm,  
They chatted with the easy charm  
Mistress and maid sometimes affect,  
With cold convention cast aside,  
When friendship close and due respect  
Have bridged the gulf that yawned so wide.

Later, within the upper wood,  
A forester in habit green—  
Whose office was to keep the game—  
Listening, as e'er his wont had been,  
And leaning 'gainst the cone-clad bower  
In hopes to cheat a passing shower,  
Had heard them laughing at the rain  
Far up the hillside—from that hour  
Neither was seen alive again—  
The sun shone out with greater light  
From afternoon till evenfall;  
No tidings still, there was that night  
A panic in the legate's hall.

They waited for the break of day  
When master, servants, neighbours all  
Explored the woods for miles away.  
But in that season of the year,  
Before the underwood was sere  
With Autumn's many-tinted robe,  
It were a giant's task to probe  
With staff or hook each cranny, nook,  
And corner of the mighty wood.  
And many feared, hope all they would,  
The keenest eyes might overlook  
The surest find and spare their pains  
Till coming of the winter rains.

And thrice the summer-house they passed,  
And, feeling door and window fast,  
Had deemed it tenantless must be.  
And failure lurked in every eye  
When, for the fourth time at the last,  
Returning home by chance near by,  
They heard within a slave-lad's cry.

Doubt with surprise was mingled then ;  
But, in an instant, master, men,  
All bringing added weight to bear  
Against the lintels none too spare,  
Less than a minute had sufficed  
To burst the pine-boughs firmly spliced.  
But as it happened in the gloom  
The foremost fell into the room  
Upon the door, hands over head,  
Against the bodies of the dead.

And he who sounded the alarm—  
The boy who seemed already old—  
Blood-spots there were upon his arm ;  
His eyes were wild, his limbs were cold,  
With chattering teeth his tale he told :  
How yesterday, when morn was old,  
Without a thought or fear of harm,  
He'd left his master's neighbouring farm  
The bower within to dust and clean.  
Much wearied then with earlier toil  
He'd crept behind a painted screen,  
Where at his task asleep he fell.

'And nothing I remember well  
After the mistress of the soil,'

Said he, ' had entered, for I slept  
Again, and woke no more until  
I heard your voices on the hill.'  
And, as he trembling finished, still  
His teeth did chatter—well they may,  
They'll chatter till his dying day.

Much wonder, therefore, all express  
To hear the little he'd confess,  
When the few words from him that fell  
But added to the mystery's spell :  
Some whispered, too—despite his fears  
The lad was wiser than his years,  
And now or when he chose could say  
More than his hearers knew to-day.

But in his pitiable state  
His lord's command forbore to press  
Confession from such wretchedness,  
Compassionate, or did he guess  
The secret of his consort's fate?  
Her end—before and after, too—  
So dark a cloud of mystery threw,  
Nine times we lived a wonder day  
Until the legate sailed away.  
But when the north winds friendly drew  
Their vessels far beyond the bay,  
The lad at nighttime to me came,  
And, weeping, told us all he knew.

Is there not hatred for the name  
That once hath done us lasting wrong?  
Hate may be error—all the same  
Can faith or patience seem so strong?

There is no surer road to fame  
Than where forgiveness cometh not.  
'Tis heresy, but only shame  
Would palliate the wrong forgot.

The lad who stood without our door  
Looked more himself—a courage new  
Battling with his distemper threw  
His former weakness in the shade ;  
And soon with every effort made  
He seemed with speaking more and more  
Relieved to utter what he knew.  
The tale he told us tell I you :

‘ How long I lay I cannot say,  
But, roused from slumber none too soon,  
Before a sound had met my ear,  
I felt, ere there was time for fear,  
Others were with me in the room.  
It must have been the afternoon—  
Not evening—for the early gloom  
Of twilight had not cast its shade ;  
And yet, somehow, I was afraid  
To break the still ere I knew who  
My comrades in the bower might be.  
Fear or a sense of decency,  
Or both, perchance, were strong in me—  
The slave may have his feelings, too,  
Altho’ unnumbered with the free.

Another hour. I did not stir.  
The light was waning—one or two  
Clouds sailing o’er the woods of fir  
Had cast their mantle where we were—

I tried a hasty peep to snatch  
Ere the cloud shadow left the thatch  
Of cones above us—but too late !  
There was a shriek and words of hate  
From Livia rising from her couch,  
Before my groping cheek could touch  
The corner of the painted screen  
That hid me from her savage eye.  
And now, whatever might have been,  
For my own safety—trembling, I,  
A prisoner forced to play the spy !

Not slow was Sabine to repel  
The charge of poison and rebel.  
Tho' peaceful first she called for law,  
Professing friendship's love for aye ;  
But as she rose the Livia saw  
Another tigress stood at bay.  
I dared to look, tho' both were small  
Passion their forms seemed to enlarge—  
Accused and bringer of the charge—  
And either might have passed for tall.  
There waiting each the other's say  
They crouched and snarled like beasts of prey,  
Or leaders of a pirate crew  
Each fearing all the other knew.  
So deep their hatred and intent  
I seemed as safe as in my tent,  
And watched them both without a fear.

Then Livia deftly made a feint  
Of falling backward in a faint—  
Unless it were the draught she said  
Received by her in Julius' stead—

I could not tell, for in a trice  
She darted like a thing of light,  
Regaining all her balance quite  
As lithe as any dancer might,  
And seized Sabina in a vice  
Whose grip so sudden, firm upheld  
Only her victim death-compelled  
With unsapped strength at last repelled ;  
They fought, they struggled on the floor  
With each attack enfeebled more  
Till, both exhausted for the time,  
Each taunts the other with the crime  
Or crimes to hatch they were afraid  
Except with one another's aid.

Within the bower's shaded hall  
There was a pleasure-table, round,  
And, with its pillar in the ground  
Rendered immovable to all.  
Prone on the glade the trunk had lain  
Overt to sunshine, storm and rain  
Ere time had seasoned every bough  
To ripe endurance—until, now,  
The helpmate of each picnic day,  
Erect, as once good pinewood green,  
It stood the combatants between.

Upon its circle scattered lay  
Some wild ferns of the forest they  
Had plucked whilst yet their brains were cool,  
And careless thrown there by some rule  
Of destiny which makes us miss  
The object which our weapon is ;  
For neither saw a poignard hid  
Beneath a box's open lid

Until its point a moment gleamed  
Where now the dying sunlight streamed,  
A single, solitary ray.  
And, stranger still it is to tell,  
In the same moment due of time  
Each saw the blade and saw it well !  
But what the fate that made it mine  
To see them rush and hear each yell  
Of savagery—it was a hell  
Incarnate who should be the first  
To satisfy her vengeance thirst,  
A race, a struggle for the thrust  
When one or both might bite the dust.

Livia—tho' dying, now we know—  
Secured the blade and gave the blow.  
Her victim fell and crushed the screen  
Where I so long had hidden been.  
Nor yet discovered ; for the dead  
Colliding when her form had reeled  
Was now to me another shield.  
You saw the blood upon my arm  
Fresh from the prostrate corse yet warm :  
I felt it cold and colder grow,  
And never night had been so slow.  
Tho' I was thankful for my bed  
And human pillow for my head  
That else a longer sleep had known.

Sleep—'tis a mockery to say  
I slept at all before the day—  
For tho' esteemed despite my birth,  
And to my mistress ever true,  
My chance of life was never worth



A slave boy's purchase if she knew  
A second witness of her guilt  
Lay where the other's blood was spilt.  
Complete the murder, she had thrown  
Herself upon her couch of down.  
All was so still, how could I tell  
If yet she breathed, or all were well?  
The agony of doubt was such  
I gnawed the screen so late my crutch.  
Tho' broken now it was a sheath  
To hold the chattering of my teeth  
That never erst had felt so cold  
In bleakest snowstorms on the wold.

At last I saw a ray of light  
Had joined me in my sorry plight.  
How then I longed to be away  
And welcome in the new-born day !  
And so another hour I spent—  
A silent one of long lament—  
I almost wished it were my last,  
Not knowing help was on the way.  
Three times you say the searchers passed  
The bower with its cones for thatch.  
I think I must have tried to snatch  
A moment's slumber, or perchance  
It came upon me in advance,  
What matters now how it befell?  
The sun that brings relief sets well.  
I heard you and my effort made  
To penetrate the forest's shade,  
And, Echo answering from her lair,  
My note of warning reached the glade  
To end your search and my despair.'

He ceased, and on a bench reclined,  
Marius, a humble servant boy,  
More than his masters wise, refined,  
Adversity could not destroy  
The native genius of his mind.  
Some questions put—we asked but few—  
He answered freely. All then knew,  
The poisoner's mask now torn aside,  
The hand by which my loved ones died :  
The voice that bade her husband take,  
And urged him, nightlong, for her sake,  
To send the noblest to the stake,  
Trusting to Cæsar to condone  
Things that could never be undone.

From that day more and more I gave  
Full heed to things beyond the grave,  
Not that the needs of state or war  
Forgotten or neglected are,  
Or other duties no less plain  
To render due to low and high  
And justice like the drops of rain—  
It is a solace when we die  
To know we have not lived in vain.

Meantime the few weeks that remained  
Red autumn's glory rapid waned.  
The season ran a colder course,  
And, tho' we never lost the sun,  
The springs were frozen to their source  
Before mid-winter had begun.  
It seemed a break in nature's law  
Without the medium of a thaw ;  
And, when a white new year had come,  
The cold spell was, so reckoned some,  
The longest living man had known.

Before another moon had flown  
The beggar on the frozen road,  
The merchant paying all he owed,  
The shepherd with a lamb to own,  
The hunter left to hunt alone,  
Even the monarch on his throne  
Was sighing for a breath of spring.  
But what to me could springtide give  
When all I loved had ceased to live?  
The chiff-chaff sang the summer in,  
The skylark warbled o'er the plain,  
But ever burned the wound within,  
And I have never smiled again !

There is a winter of the soul  
More bitter than the north wind keen ;  
Can Time restore the wife he stole  
Or the delight that once had been ?  
No ! they are gone, my darlings true,  
Beyond the sky of richer blue  
Whose spangled dome of joy enthalls  
The denizens of Heaven's halls—  
My darlings sweet, my noble boys,  
Fresh from their sport and childish joys,  
The sons, who, hasting to their prime,  
Had solaced me in life's decline,  
And in the fulness of the time,  
Had sorrowing borne me to the tomb ;  
But they are taken, I am left  
To weep them in the forest-gloom !

There is a pine grove on a hill  
Where barrows<sup>1</sup> four are untouched still,  
And ages since my race have lain.

<sup>1</sup> The modern Four Burrows.

There 'neath the forest's leafy fane,  
A Sunday's journey from our rill,  
The ashes of my dead remain.  
And when the summer breezes blow,  
And laughs the rivulet to the green,  
Oft to that woodland nook I go,  
And muse on all that might have been.  
But I must bid a truce to woe,  
For you have come mine age to cheer ;  
And bide you by the forest here,  
For solace sitteth on your brow  
To light the years left to me now  
Ere God relieve me of my care—  
Old and grey-headed, tottering too,  
I, a good Christian, will with you  
The Christians' God to men declare."

Thus sung Carādoc, line for line,  
With all the minstrel's native fire,  
The mystic records of the time,  
As Druids sung them to his sire ;  
But to Piranus it did seem  
His was the magic of the dream,  
And, to his well-pleased hearers, he  
Last of his forest ancestry,  
But not the least of all he told—  
So potent was his minstrelsy  
The longest night could not grow old.

Long ere the hours had crept to dawn  
The last rude rush-wick from the wold  
Had flickered out beneath the dome,  
Unnoticed as the morn had grown ;  
And as the hunter one or two  
Fresh pine-cones on the hearth-stone threw,

And pushed his ashen door ajar  
To light the forest from afar,  
In the rekindled light that shone,  
The wolf's head for a cap he wore  
Grinned horrid on the sanded floor  
As now at large her children run—  
You might have thought a living one  
Had entered with the morning hoar—  
Then as the pitch-fed flames mount higher,  
All three recline beside the fire  
To snatch what little sleep they may  
Before the labours of the day.

## BOOK XXI.

### THE PROPHECY OF WINGELA.

Piran and Wingela<sup>1</sup> now settle by the stream Fenton Berran, where both preach the gospel to the Britons. Piran also instructs the Britons in the art of tin dressing, which pleasing the Romans also makes them more tolerant of his mission. In the autumn of the following year, Wingela on her death-bed foretells the greatness of Piran, saying he will give his name to the land and the bay. She also prophesies that after Piran's death there will be built in remembrance of him a church which will be buried as Christ Himself was and rise again. The Britons erect a granite cross to Wingela, near which they bury her, and on the death of Piran, in obedience to her last request, they remove her and lay her finally to rest with Piran under the altar-tomb, over which they afterwards erect the church or oratory to Piran's memory. Perran-in-the-Sands to-day.

Now Autumn's cunning fast did interlace  
With jewelled gold the bracken's nodding face;  
And summer blossoms, faded, helpless sank  
To watery ruin, with the 'whelméd bank,  
Where Fenton Berran's broadened stream did  
deign,  
Through peerless meads, to mingle with the main.  
And by the hill-stream, that did well  
From rocks embosomed in a dell,  
Piranus' counsel was to dwell—  
Down in a nook, beside the salt sea-foam,  
Whose sheltered valley was the tinnars' home.

<sup>1</sup> The mother of Piran.

It was the time when sunlight spares its ray,  
And autumn tempests haste their track to roam;  
But still, October, smiling on the day,  
Shed greater glories on the moorland lone.  
Still wakes each morning brighter decked with dew,  
As from their stalls his steeds Apollo drew,  
And, firmly seated on his golden car,  
The flying worlds surveyeth from afar.  
Variant the stars that meet his steadfast view,  
And, shining stealthy, with a whiter ray,  
The frozen moon, whose hills of changeless hue  
Eternal snows do canopy for aye.  
But if, high mounting in the noon-bright sky,  
He, for the nonce, had cast his burning eye  
O'er pathless woods, hid from the light of day,  
The wonder-theme of travelled strangers' say,  
And viewed, upon the seaboard of the west,  
The rock of God laved with the billows' crest,  
The country folk betimes he might have seen,  
Where Fenton Berran's liquid music flowed  
Fast by the cell of Piran's fixed abode.

There knelt the father, every dawn of day,  
With orisons his Maker's aid to pray;  
Daily he meditates how best to win  
The pagan clans yet wandering in their sin.  
Much he did pity the poor tinner's lot,  
And sighed for wrongs the many heeded not—  
How from the streamer Roman greed would wring  
Almost the product of the ores he'd bring,  
And for forced labour grudgeth honest pay,  
Nor in the reckoning counts the mean assay.  
For though immune from service with the sword,  
And their lives brighter 'neath a kindly lord,

The tin that earned them such a scanty dole  
Was but the tribute of a subject race,  
And they the tributers who paid the toll.

So when the father, praying first for grace,  
Had communed with the spirits of the place,  
Taught, by his wit, what others left to glean,  
With closer skill they test the running stream.  
And this new increase his own hand did dress,  
With methods subtle forced the tin's finesse,  
Whose oxides, vanquished, yield an added store  
Of shining metal severed from the ore.  
Thus good Piranus, with his untaught skill,  
The metals fashioned to a Higher will.  
And this resource soon served its double end,  
For in the Roman, too, he found a friend,  
Unrighteous Mammon, who, appeased with gain,  
Indifferent viewed his preaching by the main.

This was the purpose of his daily toil,  
For this he worked, and coaxed a barren soil;  
And, labouring with him, oft did meekly kneel  
Wingela, eager to outvie his zeal,  
With deeds of love to deck the faith made plain,  
And faith to prompt works otherwise in vain.  
And, whilst they preached at even by the wave,  
Not to that age their thought alone they gave,  
Nor in *their* time their labours hoped to crown :  
Their love was for eternity,  
The far off river welling free,  
Whereto the seas of time do lead :  
There they have won a higher meed,  
And others reap where they have sown.



But, ere a second winter ran its course,  
Since they had seen Fuaran's joyous source,  
And last farewells had mingled with their tears,  
Wingela, now well stricken in her years,  
That ill withstood the troubles of the time,  
And colder solstice of another clime,  
Close on the border of another life,  
Prepares to quit all scenes of earthly strife.  
And, ere her spirit wings its raptured way,  
Where sorrows cease and tears are wiped away,  
And, by the stream of living crystal pure,  
Tastes of the tree of Life that shall endure,  
She fondly craves once more to view the main,  
And toward dear Erin fondly gaze again,  
And dedicate her final glimpse of earth  
Unto the emerald island of her birth.

Then loving hands her frail form lightly bore  
Above the meads that fringed Atlanta's shore,  
And gentle fingers shade her sainted eyes,  
Hungering in death to view the seas below;  
For it was evening, and a winter sun,  
As glorious as his summer course, had run,  
Casting his gold upon the billows' breast,  
Whose molten splendour mocketh mortal eyes,  
In dying majesty he sinks to rest,  
More beautiful than ere he left the skies.

And all the clan upon the strand flock near,  
To seek their mother's blessing, and to hear,  
In the sweet stillness of that evenfall,  
The words in death she gave to counsel all.

There was a living brightness in her eye,  
The soul will sometimes to the body lend,  
So lovely that its beam will oft belie  
The early coming of its mortal end.  
And no less clear her voice, unsaddened, lent  
Her dying words their music of content.  
Now, leaning on her maidens by the tent,  
Her hand sought Piran's 'mid the weeping throng,  
And this the burden of her holy song :

“ Gently clasp me, maidens mine,  
Whilst, with ebbing breath, I say  
All that prophecy divine  
Bids me tell you here to-day.

Strangers came we to your shore,  
Christians from a foreign land,  
To unlock the Bible's lore  
On this long-benighted strand.

Piran, towering in his height,  
Stronger than your strongest stands ;  
Yet the fight he loves to fight  
Is of faith that God commands.

I, who bare him in *this* world,  
Gained *another* in the skies,  
When its banner he unfurled,  
To enlighten my blind eyes.

Ere I seek that realm of light,  
Contemplate its vision fair ;  
Ere my spirit wings its flight,  
Hearken, people, to my prayer.

Tho' my body rest in peace,  
Fretful oft my soul must cry;  
If, when his hath found release,  
We together may not lie.

Piran, men this land shall call,  
Give his name to yonder bay,  
At his altar kings shall fall,  
Princes lowly kneel to pray.

When he's breathed his latest breath,  
When his cup of joy hath filled,  
Weeping sore his wondrous death  
A church unto his soul you'll build.

Winds and seas, allied that roar,  
'Gainst that church shall rage in vain,  
Buried as her lord before;  
She like Him must rise again."

She gasped, and, in her weeping maids' embrace,  
Lifeless, but speaking, lies her hallowed face.  
For on the lineaments, that death had claimed,  
Resplendent gleam the prophecies she named;  
And o'er her features, wrapt in sweet repose,  
The parting sun his shadow softly throws,  
And clothes with golden ray the fading smile  
She cast toward her dear loved native isle.

It was the season of the year's first youth,  
Ere migrant swallows quit the balmy south,  
Or Eurus,<sup>1</sup> bursting from the icy pole,  
Flies forth to gather many a wearied soul,

<sup>1</sup> The East wind.

Or sow in some the seeds of early death,  
And scourges nature with his snow-chilled breath.  
And, ignorant of the withering blast that looms,  
The firstborn flower of springtide gently blooms,  
And shyly peers above her winter bed,  
To blossom with a snow-white drooping head.  
With these and lilies of the vale they made  
Their floral offering to Wingela's shade,  
Whose innocence, renewed each spring, should bloom  
With vernal fragrance on their mother's tomb.

And when a year precise had run its span,  
In full moot gathered all the weeping clan,  
And rueful muse till concord's voice did swear  
A cross to raise unto her memory there,  
And they would build it ere another May,  
In grateful memory of her natal day.

Standing in lowly majesty alone,  
Of living granite was the pillar-stone,  
And, on its summit in a circle grey,  
Four apertures the cross of Christ portray.  
The time was dark, tho' Druidry no more  
With mortals' blood might stain Cornubia's shore;  
For still the mould of error's slow decay  
Was left to cloud the true believer's way.  
But what is danger to the heart that clings,  
In face of ills that tribulation brings?  
The taunts of malice were to them but things  
To spur the pilgrim to his task below.  
And they were poor, nor dight with earthly show,  
And little had of this world's goods to prove  
The depth and fervour of their lasting love.

Yet, of his store, each gave as him behoved,  
Say, what could monarchs more? They only loved !

Fast sheds cold twilight on the curling wave  
The fitful glimmer earth's dark shadows gave,  
Shrouding with sable veil the restless deep,  
And moists with dew the rugged crag and steep,  
And wets the ocean rock, where seamews soar  
To seek a nest hard by the mainland shore.  
Now, with the night, the red deer seeks the moor,  
And ever, on the ebbtide's muffled flow,  
The mists of silence still more darkling grow.  
It is night's noon, and from the steep,  
Breezes cool have fanned to sleep  
Feathered tenants of the deep,  
Roosting on the tranquil wave.  
And, 'mid the gloom, night's brooding pinions urge,  
In mournful peal, resounds the funeral dirge,  
Pouring its sad note on the watery main,  
As if to solace Erin with refrain,  
And wake with melody the land last blest  
By her now gathered to eternal rest.  
Its dying strains float far on distant seas,  
Borne on the wings of morning's virgin breeze  
That wafts the strain back to the silent bay,  
And fans with saddened breath the mossy leas  
And dewy couch whereon Wingela lay.

And where she lay they buried her, 'tis said,  
Close to the moor-streams lowly fountain-head,  
Between the cross and Piran's fane,  
Where Fenton Berran sought the plain.  
But now, as Cherith's brook of yore,  
Its task fulfilled, it flows no more.

But, when the father's soul had fled,  
The pious folk, in pity for the dead,  
And mindful of her dying prayer  
That she should rest with him beneath the lea,  
Removed her to the altar-stair,  
So they in death should not divided be.

They sleep in peace together, 'neath the sod,  
The true forerunners of the Christian's God,  
To Britain in the darkness of her night,  
Half hankering for the flesh-pots she had known,  
When priestly mandate joined to pagan rite  
With idol-rocks and wattled shrines alone  
Aloft did rear the dreaded wood-gods' throne.  
And Druid-led, on wild and rocky coast,  
Benighted clans had worshipped heaven's host,  
And altars built to heathen loves  
Where rivers purled to listening groves,  
When every grove and wooded stream  
To them a deity did seem,  
And cromlech, circle and high basin-bed  
With each new moonrise reeked of slaughtered dead,  
And darkness thick lay on the western main.  
But still the good seed deep had hidden lain,  
Whilst kings and princes deemed a shadow vain  
The great Light unbelievers counted nought,  
And, trembling oft, in lands with peril fraught,  
Their gospel creed the sons of Erin taught.

They sleep together, 'neath the sanded plains,  
Alive in death, for still the cross remains.  
All round its column's firmly planted base  
The sand of ages with a shifting face  
Still grudges man his former dwelling-place.

But o'er the solitudes where kestrels prey  
Sun-loving conies in their thousands play,  
Merrily sporting 'twixt the fruitful weed  
On whose seed-down the wandering finches feed.  
And oft the ewes close-shorn will seek a bower,  
Through vales afforested with yellow flower ;  
Shaded by sand-mounds, panting they recline,  
Or sheepcote find in some deserted mine.  
There, too, the whin-chat finds his summer home  
Where bees at eve the rush-waste's margin roam ;  
And pleasant 'tis upon a bank to rest,  
If moss star-petalled drapes a hillock's breast,  
And hearken to the brown bird's evening cry,  
When sunset's vermil tints a peaceful sky.

But other seasons, when the waves beat high, .  
The storm-born seamew, stately, screaming hoarse,  
Now tempest-driven, compelled to turn her course,  
One second poised above the cross will rest,  
Then seaward wing until the billows' crest  
Laves her white pinions, spreading to the gale  
That to the deeps shrieks with its weirdest wail,  
Where storm-tossed mariners have found their  
grave

In sea-green caverns 'neath the treacherous wave.

On summer days, when hushed the storm winds'  
roar.

And stilled the waves on ocean's sparkling floor,  
Whilst, smiling o'er the wilderness of sand,  
Nature her beauty sheds at God's command,  
The skylark charmed anew with vision bright  
To the blue vault doth haste to shape his flight,



O'er the grey pillar, where he loves to soar  
And untaught melodies unstinted pour ;  
But, ere he seeks the hedgerow's heather ledge,  
That screens from view his careless nest of sedge,  
Basking will rest upon a hillock gay  
To catch the sunbeam's oft returning ray  
And, if perchance his midday muse advise  
Renewed acquaintance with such azure skies,  
For joy of heart he'll pipe a sweeter strain  
To hymn the site of Piran's ancient fane.  
Then oft the sainted father from on high  
Must hearken to the songster's melody,  
And angels shower their blessings on his crest  
As twittering faint he seeks his grassy nest.

When, all consumed with time's corroding rust,  
That cold grey pillar crumbles into dust,  
And records vanished of those sandhills lone,  
When memories fade and chronicles are gone,  
Some other warbler still as blithe shall sing,  
And the dead past with melody e'er bring  
To strangers, who, inquiring, wonder why  
The lark sings sweeter 'neath that western sky.  
And, with the rolling ages, that do bring  
To man and things our God's due reckoning,  
Scenes that in fancy's vista now but dimly range,  
Reality may shape by nature's law of change :  
Then barren lands full fruitful shall survey  
The blue expanse of Piran's hallowed bay,  
And smiling cornfields in their beauty wave  
Above the church's long forgotten grave !







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